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★★★ Special report: Carlton set for new home, Bert van Bedaf reports page 8 ★★★

Northern Spirit's Matt Bingley gets over the top of Perth Glory marksman Damian Mori. INSET: Brisbane celebrated Paul Foster's equaliser against Sydney United which eventually lead to some crowd disruption.

Glorious Spirit become title contenders

The Northern Spirit put on their best display of the season to outgun and outclass most pundits pick for the title this season, Perth Glory.

The Glory were out of sorts thanks to a rasping display by the Spirit strike force partnership of Alex Moreira and big Ben Burgess who each hit the target in the 2-0 victory.

Spirit cemented a place in the top six and although it is early days in the season, with more displays like this one Northern Spirit will find themselves in the semi finals at the season's end.

In other matches Canberra caused the upset of the season in coming from behind to down the previously unbeaten Wollongong Wolves after trailing at half-time while controversy flared at Edensor Park where crowd trouble marred an otherwise entertaining affair.

Full NSL Wrap pages 11-13

OFF TO BATTLE

By John Economos

Australia's Under 17s squad flew out of Sydney yesterday morning, (Monday), to Samoa for the Oceania qualifiers to the FIFA World Under 17s Championship finals that will be held in Trinidad and Tobago next year.

The Australian 20 member squad had been assembled in a training camp by coaches Angie Postecoglou and Steve O'Connor at the A.I.S. in Canberra for the past week prior to their departure for Samoa.

Prior to departure, Postecoglou stated in a communique: "Overall the team has come together as a group, the understanding has developed with everything now starting to gel.

"We are all looking forward to now playing competition games," ended the Australian coach.

Northern Spirit defender Matthew Hunter was forced to drop out of the squad late last week with glandular fever.

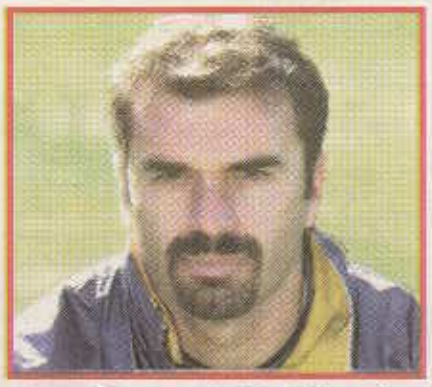
Sydney Olympic defender Brett Studman was drafted into the travelling squad as Hunter's replacement.

New Caledonia, originally slotted in Group 1 with Australia, has suddenly pulled out of the Oceania qualifiers.

Australia's first match is this Saturday against Papua New Guinea.

NSW heavily dominated selections in the Australian team with a 50 percent representation rate, whilst Victoria, Western Australia and the ACT were represented by one player each—(midfielders Massimo Murdocca-Victoria, Anthony Danze-Western Australia and Carl Valeri-ACT).

The Champions of Oceania will then head off by direct entry to Trinidad and Tobago for the World Finals.



Angie Postecoglou: National Coach of the Under 17s.

Group 1

Australia has been drawn into Group 1, alongside American Samoa, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and the Solomon Islands.

The winner of Group 1 in Samoa will play off the winner of Group 2 on a home and away basis. The two Groups will each play a Round Robin, (Group 2 which includes the stronger New Zealand and Fiji will play its Round Robin in March sometime).

Steve O'Connor: Assistant National coach.

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GOLD COAST BID FOR NSL INCLUSION CLOSER

By Glen Davis

The Gold Coast's bid to establish a national soccer league team in the near future moved a step closer last week following approval by the local council to conduct a $75,000 feasibility study into the future of Carrara sporting complex.

The feasibility study, which is expected to take nine months to complete, is a result of a submission put to the Gold Coast City Council by a group of Gold Coast businessmen which includes former Brisbane Strikers chairman Tony Petty.

The group are seeking a redevelopment of Carrara to cater for more than one national football code.

Paul Broughton, a former CEO of rugby league club Gold Coast Chargers, Paul Wyatt from Australian Rules side Southport Sharks are also part of the consortium.

Broughton said other consortium members were solicitor Greg Smith, Michael Searle, Rob Molhock and Petty.

Petty will challenge Wallace Dann for the Presidency of the Queensland Soccer Federation at its annual

general meeting next month.

The QSF holds the licence for a Brisbane team to play in the national league.

A Melbourne Cup field of candidates will contest the QSF elections as a reform group, led by current QSF board member Petty, attempts a takeover and with it control of the national league licence.

Gold Coast City councillor Bob La Castra refused to elaborate on where the NSL team would come from and whether he was proposing a new licence or a relocation.

"I canít comment at this stage because there are outside influences," he said.

La Castra said the biggest task facing the Carrara redevelopment was getting seating closer to the playing field.

"When we get an NSL side here there will be no problems getting bums on seats," he told the Gold Coast Bulletin newspaper.

"There has been $6m spent on Carrara in the last three years and it already has a capacity for about 20,000 people."

Soccer Australia plans to reduce next year's national league from its current 16 teams to 12 but its blueprint allows for a maximum of two clubs to play out of Queensland in future years.

Brisbane Strikers are the only club currently playing out of Queensland, but Richlands-based Brisbane Lions

have announced it will bid for a place next season.

Brisbane Lions chief executive Lawrence Oudendyk also is part of the so-called reform group seeking a QSF board position next month.

However, Brisbane Strikers secretary Ray Evans said last week, the Strikers would meet Soccer Australia's strict guidelines to secure its place in the NSL.

Existing and prospective clubs have until December 29 to lodge their application for admission.

Meanwhile Broughton was aware the Gold Coast had been a graveyard for national sports in recent years following the failure of rugby league, Australian Rules, basketball and baseball.

"All the sports that have tried at national level have failed because they acted in isolation," Broughton said.

"Instead of acting in isolation we're working together and have put forward a 10 to 15 year plan.

"The Gold Coast is the sixth biggest city in Australia and it hasn't got one facility that meets national criteria for any sport.

"Soccer and Australian Rules have excellent chances of being two of the main sports for Carrara."

TALKING WITH MR ED

Isn't it amazing that when the mighty fall it is almost always a David and Goliath battle that proves the undoing.

Canberra Cosmos staged an amazing second half fightback to condemn current NSL champs the Wolves to their first defeat of the season. Congratulations Tom Sermanni and the Cosmos stars. A worthy victory for your club. You have seen some tough times in recent years and I'm sure wins like this one are as sweet as they come.

An unfortunate week of crowd trouble both here at home and abroad.

There was crowd trouble at Edensor Park after a refereeing decision (page 13), South coach Mike Petersen slammed his club fans after their treatment of his players (page 13) and an Italian serie A match was abandoned six minutes from time after the crowd began throwing things onto the pitch (page 22). Let's hope we don't see any of this again any time soon.

It's great to see that Carlton are finally on the move – well it seems that way anyway.

Epping stadium looks the best bet. Bert van Bedaf takes a look the Carlton home ground saga in a little more depth (page 8).

The second phase of the Champions League kicked off during the week.

For a full wrap see pages 20 & 21 with tables on page 26.

I guess players just love to play. That's what Tore Andre Flo must have been thinking before his big move to Glasgow Rangers (page 25). At least he'll play every week now.

Low and behold he has begun paying back his huge transfer fee by scoring on debut. The bonus – it was against Celtic.

Still overseas, young Rio Ferdinand has become the most expensive British transferred defender (page 24).

It is a big price tag for a very young man. Let's hope he proves his worth.

An interesting bit of club loyalty over the weekend in the Serie A (page 22). Gabriel Batistuta scored the winner for his new club Roma against his club of nine years Fiorentina.

Instead of celebrating, he burst into tears. I guess his heart is now wearing Red and Yellow but it's still Purple on the inside.

Finally, on a welcoming note for us, it is great to see Harry Kewell back in training (page 25).

If for no other reason I am anxious to see how lethal the all-Australian partnership can become at Leeds.

Ed.

MAGNACCA JOINS NEWCASTLE

By Greg Danvers

Lloyd Scott Newcastle United has secured the services of the promising and youthful Anthony Magnacca.

Twenty-two year-old Magnacca, after two seasons in the NSL, will sign with United for the remainder of the season.

Having played 48 games and scored five goals the lanky attacking midfielder will add some depth to the Newcastle squad.

"Anthony is a player with pace and skill," Newcastle United coach Lee Sterrey said yesterday.

"He glides across the park and can turn a bloke either left or right.

"I first saw him when he was in Newcastle a couple of seasons ago with Canberra and he was probably the best thing in a Canberra shirt that night."

Magnacca played with Canberra Cosmos in 1998/99 scoring three goals from 22 games and was snapped up by South Melbourne last season on a two-year deal.

This season he has had trouble breaking into the South Melbourne squad and has been training with the Victorian Institute of Sport after last season making 26 appearances netting two goals.

While Andy Harper and Esala Masi are sidelined the recruit has a window of opportunity to secure a run on spot in the Newcastle line-up but will need to settle in quickly and prove his fitness to the coach.

"He has had trouble securing a first team spot at (South) Melbourne and with such depth down there it would be hard for a young fellow to break into the starting 11," Sterrey said of Magnacca's plight.

"We need to asses his fitness and use him wisely. I know he is very keen to prove himself here in Newcastle and his addition to the squad keeps the competition on for spots in the starting line-up.

"Given that Andy Harper and Esala Masi are out for awhile he (Magnacca) gives us a few more options."

PETERSEN BAGS FANS AND REFEREES

By Bert van Bedaf

South Melbourne coach Mike Petersen lashed out at referees and fans following his side's last-second 1-1 draw with Parramatta Power at Bob Jane stadium last Sunday.

The game always had an explosive element in store with former South defender Nick Orlic lining up for Power against his old team.

One transgression earned him a yellow card after six minutes, when he brought down Andy Vlahos. But another foul on Paul Trimboli after 29 minutes brought the tall defender a reprieve from referee Matthew Breeze.

Petersen believed it was a legitimate second bookable offence and therefore Orlic should have been red-carded.

"I have a real problem - and this is not a whinge at all but for the game's sake - about refereeing consistency. I think, they're ruining the game, basically.

"In football, you have your ups and downs and you've got to cope with that. But I just can't get over the lack of consistency with refereeing.

It's really weighing the game down in my opinion.

"I don't care what the rules are about saying or not saying anything.

Feel free to use it," Petersen opened up at the post-match press conference.

"It's not even about the (Orlic) incident. Nick's a great friend of mine and he's served the club well. But to me that (second foul) was a blatant yellow card offence.

"If we're going to get a player sent off for two celebrations in a game and we're going to (apply) the letter of the law, then to me that (second foul) was a bookable offence.

Petersen referred to South's 3-1 victory over Adelaide City Force in the opening round, when Vlahos was sent off for celebrating his two goals too abundantly to the liking of referee Con Diomis.

Petersen then said, "After the first goal he ran to the crowd and for the second goal he stayed on the pitch but he took his shirt off. It you take the letter of the law, they were two bookable offences. But you really have to wonder whether we're over-policing the game."

Last Sunday, he said, "They (referees) are too busy evening up other scenarios, saying 'I've already booked him, s*#! now I've got to send him off, so I'd better have a word with him'. To me that's wrong, incorrect.

"I don't know, if we're ever going to address it. Maybe it's not my position as coach of a football team, but certainly it's disappointing to see that lack of consistency.

"They're like a protected species. We're all being measured as coaches and players. If we don't do our job, we suffer the consequences. But who's measuring them?

"The game has progressed far beyond the capabilities of referees. I'm not having an individual go here against any particular referee. I believe it's just the state we're in at the moment. And it's ruining the game in my opinion," Petersen said.

Parramatta coach David Mitchell also commented on the Orlic fouls. "I thought, the second foul was more of a booking than the first one. The first one was a bit harsh," he said.

Petersen also tangled with South supporters, berating them from the pitch after the fans had rubbished the team, who were putting in a big effort to draw level with Parramatta.

"I've always had a love-hate relationship with the supporters. What really disappoints me is that they'll win with you, but they

Mike Petersen: Not happy.

won't lose with you," Petersen said.

"I had a look at them and I thought, Jesus, the boys are really working

hard here, and the supporters, and I'd like to use that term very lightly in future, had a go at them.

"It's a cross section of society and that's life.

"I'm very protective of the group. If they're making any comments towards them, to the players, I'm one of the boys and I'll just go into bat for them.

"It's an emotional game and I'm gonna be, ended Petersen.

ABSW's new email: soccer@foreignlanguage.com.au
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Marconi Must Conquer The Kingz

By John Economos

MARCONI's coach Eddie Krncevic was far from happy after having been held to a scoreless draw last Friday night at Mobil Park by last placed, but a stubborn, Eastern Pride.

The former Australian World Cup striker, now coaching Marconi, stated to ABSW last night: "Eastern Pride's goalkeeper had a very good game making some fine saves.

Raphael Bove: Out of action with a complete knee reconstruction last week.

"I have been happy with our defence and our midfield which is solid.

"It's just a matter of time in us putting away our chances.

"Against the Kingz on Saturday we will be out for a bit of revenge.

"Last season we lost to them in both legs, 0-3 at home and 3-1 in New Zealand," Krncevic recalled.

The Marconi squad has been struck by a patch of costly injuries.

Midfielder-cum-striker Sasa Radulovic has been sidelined with an ankle injury he sustained in the away match against Sydney United.

It's almost certain Radulovic will still be unavailable for action for another two weeks.

Far more seriously, is the loss for weeks to come of dynamic midfielder Raphael Bove.

The industrious Bove suffered a serious knee injury two weeks ago in Marconi's home clash, (and loss), against Sydney Olympic.

Eddie Krncevic: Marconi's head coach.

The damage sustained to Bove's knee ultimately necessitated the player to undergo a complete knee reconstruction only last Thursday.

A concerned Krncevic then went on to add: "Our game against the Kingz is a vital one.

"In fact it's worth six points to us as we really need to win it."

The Auckland Kingz will be no pushover for Marconi.

The tough and robust Carlton painfully found this out last Friday night in Auckland where the Kiwis most defiantly held the Victorians out to a scoreless draw.

Despite their low position on the League ladder, the Kingz in seven games have still managed to score 10 goals, two more in fact than Marconi.

Marconi has struggled to find the target this season despite having a relatively large contingent of five strikers.

A week ago against Sydney Olympic, experienced striker Kris Trajanovski scored a double for Marconi, but even this feat hasn't guaranteed the former international a spot in Marconi's starting XI.

The real problem however is not in the strike-line, but in the midfield where Marconi has suffered from a chronic ailment of not having a real specialist playmaker.

In fact this problem has surprisingly existed, and has been left unattended with monotonous regularity for the past seven years.

Not since the days, (1993), of the fabulous Italian import, Ermano Pelucchi, has Marconi had an accomplished playmaker that has been able to regularly serve the strike-line with quality supply.

Wynton Rufer: The Kingz' sensational striker back in action.

Prior to Pelucchi was the stylish Tommy McCulloch, who to this day, inexplicably was forced into a premature retirement by previous Marconi coaches.

Experienced goascoring midfielder, Tim Stevens, who to date has scored 40 percent of the Kingz' goals, could prove to be a threatening thorn for Marconi unless he's tracked tightly.

Another potential huge and heavy headache facing Marconi on Saturday, is the belated return to action of the Kingz' sensational veteran international goal-ace and co-coach, Wynton Rufer.

The incredible, former Kiwi triple World Cup superstar, made his long awaited comeback on the pitch last Friday night against Carlton.

There is not a single defender in all of Australia that can successfully mark the 36-year-old Rufer if the powerful marksman, wearing the Kingz' No 7 shirt, is on song.

GENERAL MANAGER

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The Good Oil ... The Good Oil ...

Kevin Keegan: Playing for Blacktown City.

Peter Raskopoulos with Olympic's Technical Director Of Coaching, Frank Arok.

By John Economos

BLACKTOWN CITY SOCCER CLUB, current League and Cup Champions of the NSW Soccer Federation, must be highly commended for going out of its way to assist the Media.

Last week, lobbing on my desk, was a full and detailed press kit for the current new Premier League season.

The kit as well as containing an extensive list of contact numbers, included no less than 26 well detailed and most informative profiles that embraced not only the entire First grade squad, but also the entire coaching staff.

Blacktown City Soccer Club: League Champions having scooped up the pool at the last NSW Annual Awards Night.

(NSL Clubs please take note).

The Blacktown City Club, now headed by Director and Football Chairman Mr Don O'Regan, was founded back in 1953 as 'Toongabbie', but in 1979 it had a name change to the current "Blacktown City".

This progressive and tightly managed Club owns its ground, (the Gabbie Stadium), as well as its own modern Social Club boasting 3,500 members plus.

Blacktown City competed in the NSL in 1980, 81, 84, 85, 86, 89 as well as in 1990.

Blacktown City has a track record of doing things right and in the past 15 years has won a huge number of League Championships, Grand Finals and Cup Finals.

During the 80s, Blacktown City brought out England World Cup mega-stars such as the legendry Bobby Charlton and then the fabulous flanker Kevin Keegan to guest-play as well as coach at children clinics.

A Blacktown City official and coach, after his Club had won the 'double' last season, stated to 'Good Oil': "I'll be honest to you.

"As you can see we do things right out here.

"We at Blacktown City have no desire to get back into the National League.

"We are a progressive and constructive Club that loves to produce players and they can then leave us to go up to the next level.

"The production of players is what we are all about, and you can quote me on that," he underlined.

Bobby Charlton: Playing for Blacktown City.

●●●●

CHAD GIBSON, Marconi's flamboyant and long-range goalscoring midfielder or defender, will leave in January on a one year loan deal to play for Norwegian Club side, F.K. Boda/Glimt.

Due to the fact that the Norwegian National League is played in the northern Summer because of their harsh winter, Gibson will not be required to report to the club till January.

Gibson so impressed them when he trialed with the Norwegians during the NSL's off-season, that a formal contract was offered to him recently.

The deal with Marconi grants the Norwegians the option to purchase Gibson outright at the end of their season in September next year.

Chad Gibson: Off to Norway in January.

●●●●

THE BANK OF CYPRUS last Wednesday, signed up a sponsorship deal with Sydney Olympic.

The Bank which envisages to soon open up a new and first branch in Sydney's Martin Place, has signed a five figure 'shorts sponsorship'.

The Bank's logo will appear on the legging of the Olympic players' shorts.

The Bank Of Cyprus Regional General Manager, Mr Peter Pyrgiotis stated at a media cocktail conference: "Our sponsorship continues a tradition of international sporting relationships which include First Division Basketball Clubs in Greece, and the Arsenal F.C. in England."

The Bank Of Cyprus now links up with 'Contrabart Trade Exchange', WorldxChange Communications', Ascot Car Rentals' plus 'Thai Airways' as part of Sydney Olympic's corporate family.

Peter Raskopoulos, Olympic's General manager, told the guests: "Sydney Olympic is looking forward to a rewarding business relationship with the Bank Of Cyprus and officially welcome them to the Olympic corporate team."

●●●●

PARRAMATTA POWER is hosting its first 'Fan Fair' tomorrow (Wednesday 29th) from 5.30pm through to 7pm at the rear of the Parramatta Stadium.

This is going to be a fun-filled and free night for all the Power fans.

There will be jumping castles and free rides, plus other activities for the children with clowns as well as the appearance of Captain Power.

Free food will be available as well as all the Power players will be attending to sign autographs and supervise games and activities.

Andrew Crews: The Power's goalkeeper.

ROBBIE TRAJKOVSKI, the Perth Glory's highly skilled right wing-back, racked up his 150th NSL match last Friday night against the Northern Spirit at North Sydney Oval.

In the same game, the Spirit's powerful goalkeeper, Paul Henderson knocked up his 50th game in the National League, all with the Spirit.

Robbie Trajkovski: 150th match in the NSL last Friday night.

●●●●

SERGIO MELTA, the former Adelaide City international midfielder-cum-defender, and long time record holder of having knocked up the All Time NSL Appearances Record in the NSL, (445), the whole lot with the 'Black and Whites', will soon see his record broken by his former team-mate, Alex Tobin, now with the Parramatta Power.

Tobin, after last Sunday's away clash with South Melbourne, has now knocked up 443 games, two short of equalling the magnificent Melta's milestone.

By the way, Melta's colossal record that he achieved with Adelaide City between 1977 and 1994, still rates as the highest of any footballing code in Australia.

Sergio Melta: His all time record about to be broken.

●●●●

TERRY VENABLES, the former Australian World Cup coach, plus some of the Australian national players, can be seen tomorrow night on SBS' 'Toyota Sports' programme at 7pm which will screen a 'memorial' resume of what happened on that most dreaded night at the M.C.G. where Australia was knocked out by Iran for the 1998 World Cup Finals.

It will be exactly three years to the VERY day tomorrow when that unforgivable and indelible debacle occurred with our national team.

This programme, (aptly titled 'the Mourning After'), will be an exclusive retrospective into one of the biggest and significant event that has happened in the history of Australian Soccer.

Nothing less than a mighty and indelible, black scar.

During this important, but most painful 'look-back', SBS will screen exclusive interviews of players that were at the M.C.G. that very night.

The interviews will include Craig Moore, both Vidmar brothers, (Aurelio and Tony), Stan Lazaridis, Robbie Slater.

SBS will also show clips of the then Australia's coach Terry Venables as well as the then Chairman of Soccer Australia, David Hill.

Where are these last two figures in Australian Soccer today, pray tell?

Terry Venables: Former Australian World Cup coach.

Many, to this very day, still believe that Venables had a lot to answer for the 2-2 draw after Australia had streaked to a 2-0 lead.

In fact he couldn't wait to fly out the very next day for a holiday before returning to England.

(Continued on page 5)

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The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

By John Economos

The very next day? So much for remorse.

Being just a hired Englishman, you couldn't expect him to feel the pain or any of our severely dented national pride.

'Good Oil', to this very day, also bitterly questions a few most wrongful decisions, let alone a reckless tactic or two.

Before we see what SBS comes up with tomorrow night, let's ponder some aspects of this 'lost battle'.

For example, why on Earth did Australia use all three not match-fit midfielders in Craig Foster, Ned Zelic and Aurelio Vidmar to start the match?

At this very same period of time, all three had hardly played a total of a dozen games between them with their respective clubs in Europe.

This very point was made by ABSW well PRIOR to the game.

All three Australian midfielders were far from being regulars with their respective European clubs at the time.

How could all three have been pitted in against an iron-clad Iranian side that had just been even further battle-hardened, coming directly out of their most hectic Asian qualifiers?

Secondly, why on Earth wasn't the hungrier, fitter and more tenacious Graham Arnold, not used much earlier?

Even as a midfielder, Arnold would have proven to be a much tougher customer for the Iranians to harness.

Thirdly, and for God's sake, why was Australia's most experienced, and most consistent player, not used AT ALL?

Especially after Australia hit a two-goal lead?

But of course, here we are talking of none other than the Prince of Australian sweepers, the magnificent Milan Ivanovic.

Andre Buccoli could have seen that it was imperative for Australia to shut-down the game just after halftime.

But, no.

No European nation, (any other sensible nation for that matter), would have allowed one of its central defenders in the second half to go galloping up the flank in attack.

What the hell was he doing?

Looking for a third Australian goal for heavens sake!

Ivan Milanovic: (No: 4) In action for Australia. Why was he left out totally?

But we did.

Let's say that that, particular player was young, foolish and irresponsible.

Then why the hell did Venables allow it to happen?

Didn't Soccer Australia, (or David Hill), authorise obscene mega-bucks to be paid to Venables for his professional expertice and guidance?

Would the previous national coach Eddie Thomson have tolerated such an unprofessional, tactical stupidity?

Absolutley not.

Australia not qualifying for France in 1998, proved highly costly.

Not only did it cost this nation a minimum of US$2 million, plus the global humiliation suffered, but a helluva lot more.

Letting Iran out of jail to march into France for the World Cup Finals, simultaneously left our domestic code in its aftermath with a crippled public profile.

Tomorrow night SBS. At 7pm.

Compelling viewing.

Watch it and relive the agony.

●●●●

TROY HALPIN, Sydney Olympic's refined playmaker, is currently being hunted by at least two clubs from England.

'Good Oil' has been able to identify that the English clubs have already tabled an offer of some £750,000 pounds ($1.85m).

For now, Olympic has not accepted the offer for their star midfielder.

And speaking of Halpin, last Sunday night at the Belmore Sports Ground, he must have felt like a carpenter, and not a midfielder.

Troy Halpin: Sydney Olympic's playmaker.

Not once, but twice Halpin haplessly hit the post with long-range shots trying to crack the defiant and tight Melbourne Knights.

His first hit was a magnificent 25-metre screaming drive, cracked with the outstep of his right boot that rocked the right upright.

●●●●

AFTER MATCH Media Conferences organised by some of the Sydney clubs this season, have to date been nothing less than monumental shemozzles.

One particular club at the start of this season, even went as far as to ludicrously employ security guards to cordon off the dressing room areas with patrols.

These guards zealously blocked the media from approaching the dressing rooms to interview the coaches and players.

One such guard at this particular Sydney club, behaved with such enthusiastic power, flexing his muscles as if he was on duty during 'Beatlemania' in the 60s.

And this is today with Soccer starved of exposure, forcing one to literally and laboriously scan the newspapers with a microscope in a desperate search to find a line somewhere, written on Soccer.

Getting back to this Club, this particular muscle-flexing guard, even heatedly clashed with an ABSW journo, blocking his path to the dressing rooms.

To cover himself, the guard barked out to ABSW: "I've got strict orders to keep you guys out of this area".

What crap! What absolute sheer stupidity!

Not by the guard, (entirely), mind you, but by the foolish Club management that had instructed 'Chesty Bond' to needlessly block out the media.

And when we say Soccer media, we are here talking about only two or three working journos. Not a huge media scrum of 50 or 60 reporters. And not terrorists being blocked from attacking the privy coaches.

Having lodged an official complaint direct to that specific Club in question some weeks ago, pointing out the stupidity of such strong, security measures and directives, the media thankfully, is now allowed into the area at this Club.

Just as we solved one problem, another one surfaced last week-end, (and again, not for the first time).

This second Club's officials, insisted that a press conference would be organised 'upstairs', and well away from the dressing rooms.

Again a joke.

The attending media, (this time four in number), sheepishly and dutifully, went 'upstairs' as instructed, and as expected, found no coaches.

Both coaches just happened to be lingering downstairs.

Angered by the some 25 minutes delay, and just as the frustrated journos were about to depart, (minus interviews), the two coaches suddenly lobbed 'upstairs'.

The interviews however had to be done whilst at least 25 supporters were also mingling in the 'upstairs' area.

Sheer madness.

What many of our idiotic, unprofessional, weekend power-mad club officials totally fail to understand, (because they just wouldn't have a clue), is that working journos don't have time to waste immediately after a match.

The media members must file as soon as possible to meet deadlines with their respective newspapers. Newspapers can't wait for Soccer reports to drift in at anytime.

Thankfully, (with this particular club last weekend), the four journos lodged a complaint about the press conference fiasco direct to that club's General manager. Most thankfully again, this manager, (a former player), immediately understood and rectified the situation for all future games.

What most of our Soccer 'officials', (not only club, but Soccer Australia as well), urgently need to do, is to briefly venture across to see, just how the Rugby League people treat its media members.

With super, pleasant, extremely co-operative and most willing efficiency.

●●●●

THE UNDERSTATEMENT of the week surely was made by Sydney Olympic's undefeated coach Branko Culina last Sunday night at the Belmore Sports Ground following his team's narrow 1-0 win over the Melbourne Knights in injury time.

The philosophical Culina stated to the media after the match: "I told the players to be patient and the goal would come."

Yes it did. Three minutes into stoppage time.

How patient is that?

Olympic having missed at least four others previously in regular time, including hitting the post twice, three minutes into injury time substitute midfielder, George Goutzioulis, (although most belatedly), ultimately, headed in the 'patient winner'.

George Goutzioulis

Is that why they say 'Patience is a virtue?'

●●●●

BRETT EMERTON, Feyenoord's goalscoring Australian right wingback international, is already being pursued by other European clubs, one from Italy and at least one from England.

His Dutch Club that paid Sydney Olympic just a few months ago $1.38 million for his signature, has now placed a market value on Emerton's head of $5 million.

Brett Emerton: Hunted by Euro clubs.

And already there are two takers in the pipeline, although 'Emmo' is in no hurry to leave Feynoord.

Emerton has played in the first team in the last 10 straight games and last week even scored a brace in Feyenoord's 3-1 win.

DULWICH HILL SOCCER CLUB
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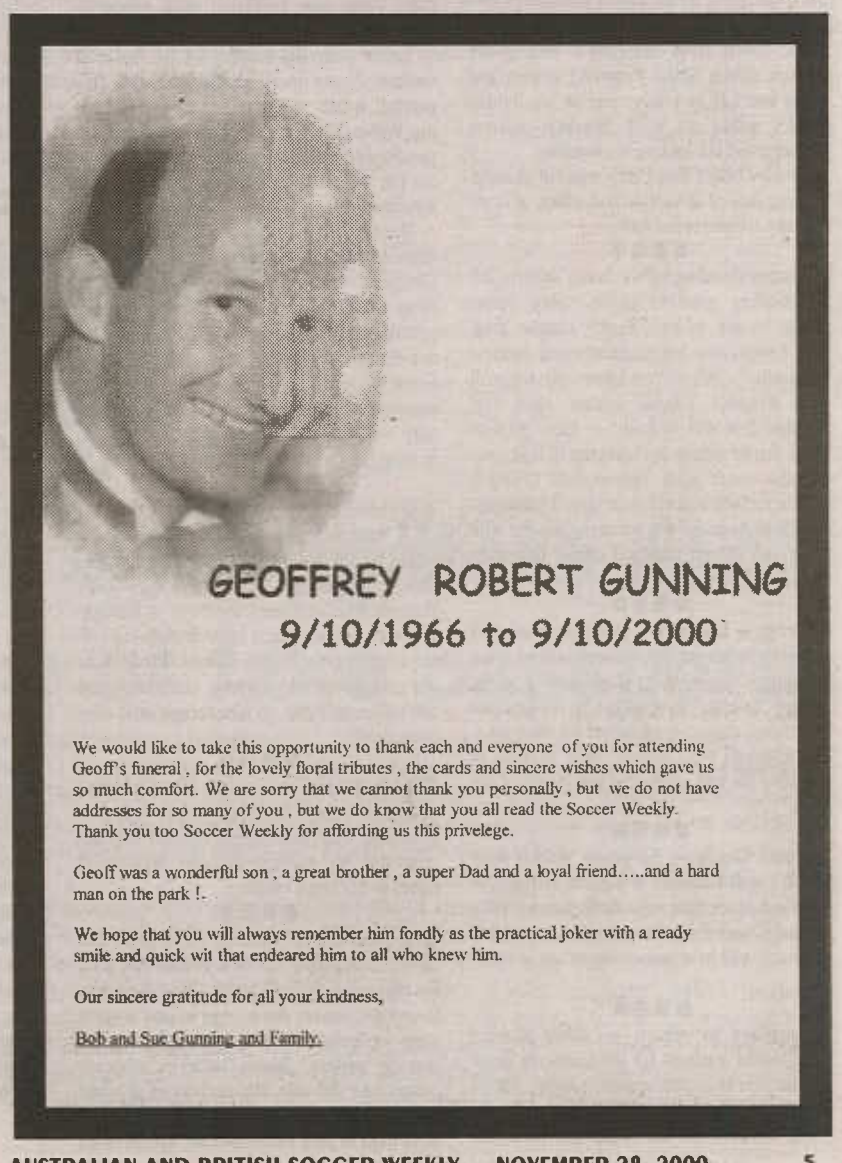
FOR THE 2001 SOCCER SEASON

Dulwich Hill S.C. is a Super League club. The Club is a multicultural Soccer Club which is open to all who love Soccer and are keen to participate.

DULWICH HILL SOCCER CLUB

Where: Tempe Reserve
Who: U13's, U14's, U15's, U16's
When: Tuesday November 21, 28 December 5
Thursday November 23, 30 December 7
Time: U13's & U15's 5pm-6.30pm
U14's & U16's 6.30pm-8pm

Enquiries: Club Secretary D. Martins: Ph: 0412 076 212
Director Of Coaching Alan Paine: Ph: 9545 1442
Youth League Co-Ordinator Brian Fong 0419 255 951



OFF THE CROSSBA

By Allan Crisp

VANISHING CROWDS

"Where have all the people gone? It's one question Adelaide's two Philips Soccer League clubs would dearly love to know the answer to. After a record-breaking 1977 season, attendances to home fixtures have dropped a good 50 per cent.

An alarming statistic when you consider gates are a club's bread and butter. It's obvious the fans are there and there are a dozen reasons that could be argued why they haven't come back.

Perhaps the clubs are at fault for not taking the initiative from 1977 and going all out to promote soccer even further.

The PSL has certainly lacked a great deal in the promotion department, despite John Frank's never-ending and tireless public relations excursions between States.

Since Sir Arthur George's much publicised statement about the McNally-West deal, little has been heard or done regarding marketing, TV coverage and a host of other promises. Steps are being taken but ever so slowly.

Unless support increases at grounds, soccer must face the prospect of being a minor sport without a hope in hell of matching it with Aussie Rules.

And without large crowds, the media really aren't interested."

That was the way Frank Pangallo editorialized in Adelaide City's match program dated, Sunday, July 13 1980 — just four seasons into the new NSL competition.

Some things have changed since, but not for the better, with Adelaide now down to a single team, since the demise of West Adelaide.

So, Frank's initial query, "Where have all the people gone," is being asked yet again and, just as was the case in 1980, debate rages as reasons are sought for the downturn in spectator interest.

Talk to Adelaide City Force chairman Bob D'Ottavi and he will tell you that the fault lies with the media and its perceived negative coverage of his club.

Talk to supporters and they say they spent a large portion of their year 2000 sporting cash to watch the Sydney Olympics football extravaganza in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra or home at Hindmarsh Stadium.

Others, whose hip pocket nerves could stand any shocks, stayed away in silent protest over the departure of long serving club favourites Alex Tobin, Damian Mori and Angelo Costanzo.

That sort of drama did not happen in 1980 when fans drifted away, despite the presence of Bobby Russell, Bugsy Nyskohus, John Perin, Serg Melta, Agenor Muniz, Justin Fashanu, John Besir, Peter Marshall and surprise goal grabbing English import Colin Barnes.

And gracing the City bench that day, when Frank Pangallo penned his editorial, were Gary Marocchi, David Mitchell and Brian Northcote.

So the accusing fingers could not be pointed at lack of talent among the 1980 City squad, ably coached by Rale Rasic.

Nor should the supporters, circa 2000, use lack of star quality as an excuse for not filling the magnificent Hindmarsh facility.

The exciting contribution of youngsters Scott Tunbridge, Lucas Pantelis, Louis Brain, Ivan Karlovic, Mario Karlovic, Kristian Rees and Nick Budin has been mind boggling, while with Aaron Goulding, Shane Thompson and Neil Childs waiting in the wings, it should be a case of you ain't seen nothing yet.

Youth apart, the form of veterans Carl Veart, Brad Hassell and young veterans Nick Sabljak and Adrian Cagalj has been outstanding.

The return from injury of captain Aurelio Vidmar and Claudio Pelosi should add fuel to the Force fire and present further reasons for fans to revisit Hindmarsh.

Success breeds success so consistent performance should reap its rewards, even with a critically demanding audience.

HIGH FIVE

Would statistical buffs Andrew Howe, Greg Blake, Peter Desira and new chum Mark Baylis please advise.

Is the recent scoring feat during the Adelaide City-Northern Spirit match the first time that five teenagers contributed all five goals in an NSL game that finished 3-2?

Louis Brain, Scott Tunbridge and Ivan Karlovic (City) and Simon Catanzaro and Ben Burgess (Spirit) were the tyros.

KICK A VIC

Let's stir the old interstate rivalry that simmers between South Australia and Victoria by offering our congratulations to the Victorian Soccer Federation for introducing salary caps for their Premier League and State League Division One from next season.

The South Australian Socc
salary cap system in operation
and State League since 1996.

But, before we embark on
and in the interest of fair play
we should acknowledge that
higher than ours.

The SA cap for Premier Le
per season, with $35,000 the
State League clubs.

If we Croweaters wanted t
we could say that Victoria
because they are big heads, b
that low!

JETS WA

Last season's Premier Leag
up Modbury Jets began p
Tuesday under re-appointed
Gray.

Meanwhile, Premier Leag
seeking coaches for their U
teams with applicants urged
Woodville SA — 5011 or ring

And Saturday Amateur clu
senior coach. Applications ar
to the club secretary PO Box
5159 before December 5.

*Allan Crisp can be he
Breakfast Soccer Show
7.30pm-9am, along with
international John Perin,
Presenter Robbie Popplest
soccer writer Meno Toutsid
and British Soccer Weekly*

WOLLONGONG NEWS

By Otto Bader

Poor weather — poor crowd (3,876) — poor second half for Wolves — not a game cherished by the fans. Even though two main players were out and replacements had to be found from the club's own youth sources, striker Sasho Petrovski scoring and being sent off in injury time in last Friday night's game at WIN Stadium against Canberra did not look very attractive.

Wolves coach Ron Corry was not pleased, blasting lack of discipline and a lack of commitment in the second half.

■■■■

Names standing out — from Canberra and looking good in general play Shane Lyons — son of past Rugby League great Cliff Lyons, also Jon Angelucci and Andrew Ravanello — two players known playing with local Premier League soccer club Port Kembla. For the Wolves — local product Frank Barila getting his first taste of NSL soccer plus youth grade players Paul O'Grady and Steve Dimitrievski, new signed goalkeeper Steven Angelov was formerly playing with local side Albion park and comes originally from Newcastle.

■■■■

Soccer — Baseball — as a gesture of good sports relations the Wolves invited local Illawarra Championship team playing in the Sydney Baseball competition to demonstrate their sport, curiously observed by the crowd. The Baseball boys showed their strength in throwing the ball nearly the full length of the pitch.

■■■■

Youth Grade — the young Wolves drew 1-1 with Canberra in a game they should have won twice over with many chances being wasted. Coach Eddy Tesoro was not satisfied at all and will have something to say at train-

hopefully will be available for the next game and also Dino Mennillo could be right but striker Scott Chipperfield, expected to return from England, is ordered to serve two games suspensions while out of the country for a one game suspension normally, quite extraordinary.

Soccer Australia is applying the 'letter of the law' — one must be available even if suspended, which seems rather unfair. Perhaps the Wolves should have kept quiet and not mentioned that Chipperfield travelled to the UK for a trial and possible contract.

Newly joined young 18-year-old midfielder player George Nohra was called upon to make his debut against Canberra and did not disappoint. Goalkeeper Grant Barlow, coming in for regular Daniel Beltrame, did very well and looks the part to keep his spot.

■■■■

Wolves Players on Sale — all 19 present players have been put on sale — but before anybody panics it is a marketing idea from the club's marketing guru Greg Burgess who auctioned the boys to business sponsors and succeeded to cover each individual soccer player with a sponsor. Pity that he did not auction the coaching staff, managers and office staff plus all directors to raise even more funds.

■■■■

Disappointment — coach Ron Corry had hopes to sign Brazilian Andrew Santos, a promising triallist, however contract negotiations did not succeed and the player will return to his home country.

■■■■

100 NSL Games achiever George Souris

looking for special treatment.

■■■■

Illawarra Soccer — Pre-Season Trials with some first division clubs having commenced to assemble their players with much difficulties, many pursuing other sports. Warilla Wanderers have appointed as head coach Billy Kyriakidis and assistant Martin Videmar, both former experienced top grade players.

Training is planned every Thursday night at King Mickey Park until Christmas and thereafter three time a week Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays with the aim to do well and eventual promotion. Major sponsor is the Warilla Sporties Club.

Shellharbour City is ready to start Thursdays from 6pm at Flinders Reserve for the time being, next to sponsors Shellharbour Workers Club, coach Rodney Haggerty is eager to talk to interested players.

Barbarians Soccer Club advertise training at Barrack Heights to start Tuesdays and Thursdays with the coach to be confirmed, the talk is that former striker Robert Hernandez is lined up for the job.

Kiama Soccer club with re-appointed coach Brod Crighton is planning to run trials soon for all grades at Kiama Leisure Centre. Secretary David Cooper is concerned having to register players for the pre-season Corrimal Leagues Club knock-out early, without having everybody on deck, it would be advantageous if they could still trial players and decide later to sign them up with paying the money for registration and insurance.

Dapto Soccer, talking to new coach Chris Dunleavy, preparations are slow, once per

Bruce controvers

By Graham Cooke

The Bruce Stadium turf, possibly the best known stretch of grass in Australia in the wake of the problems leading up to the Olympic Games, has hit new controversies.

This time it is the ACT Brumbies rugby union team, which shares the stadium with the Canberra Cosmos and league's Canberra Raiders. A union official says the current surface is "too hard" for the code and should be replaced.

As the turf was laid to suit the requirements of FIFA at the Olympic Games, it is hardly surprising that Cosmos coach Tom Sermanni disagrees. "As far as we are concerned, the pitch is perfect," he said. "If the Brumbies have problems it is something they will have to sort out with the Bruce Stadium authorities.

"Any decision
have to come fro
would imagine t
money spent o
changes of that
unlikely."

Meanwhile, it
wrangle over the
again in the New
and Brumbies sea

Ominously, alt
NSL fixture list s
management are
dates for more th

This may resul
give up one or
evening dates —
man Danny Mo
consistency and
supporters.

COSMOS PLAYER SAGA CO

By Graham Cooke

The saga of would-be Canberra Cosmos player Milton Cortes has lumbered on into another week, after coach Tom Sermanni ruled him out of last Friday's game against Wollongong Wolves.

Cortes, who was in Australia on a tourist visa, was told by the Department of Immigration that he must leave the country in order to apply for that to be changed, allowing him to play professionally for Canberra.

The Uruguyan national team player spent most of last week in Auckland try-

training," the co
be fair to pitch h
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The costly fa
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imports, Scots D
Hamilton, both
tourist visas and
them without lea

Sermanni said
that "except perh
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4th Futsal World Cup - Guatemala

Australia bow out after disappointing campaign

By Daniel Giorelando

Australia will return home from Guatemala very much disappointed after losing all three of their matches at the ongoing Futsal World Cup.

After being convincingly beaten in their opening game by Costa Rica 6-2, Australia could only score one more goal in their two remaining matches, in the meantime conceding 16 as they went down 6-0 to Croatia, followed up by a 10-1 loss at the hands of group winners Russia.

Whilst the Australian's were outclassed and have a lot to work on before they can be classed as a Futsal powerhouse, the team would be relatively pleased with just qualifying for the tournament.

Simon Aithchison: Captained Australia against Croatia.

Coach Jim Roberts rotated his squad throughout the three matches to give his squad some game time and a taste of World Cup football.

Australia entered last Tuesday's match against Croatia, without the services of goalkeeper and regular captain Adam Confoy, Gavin O'Brien and Elia Salloum.

Simon Aitchison was rewarded with the captaincy while Jorge Suarez was given the unenviable task of guarding the posts.

The Croatian's, also coming off a first up loss, needed a win to revitalise their finals hopes, and that they did, knocking in three goals in each half to run out 6-0 winners.

Mico Martic (5th and 16th minute) and Robert Grdovic (13th and 35th minute) both bagged doubles in the comfortable win.

With nothing but pride to play for in their final group match against leaders and Europeans powerhouses Russia, the Aussies fought gallantly before being outclassed by a more superior and skilful opponent, eventually going down by 10-1.

Russia's Markin Mikhail gets ahead of Argentina's Segura Juan

Chugunov and Vladislav Shuchko both bagging doubles.

Australia finished last in Group C, without any points and just three goals scored while conceding 22.

Brazil's Anderson scores after beating Portugese keeper Nana.

Australia fielded their strongest five, included the return of keeper and Captain Adam Confoy however the teams improved performance was not reflected on the scoreboard.

In fact to the surprise of many, Australia shot out of the blocks quicker than an Olympic sprinter to take the lead after just 14 seconds through Utility Simon Aithchison.

To their credit, The Australians held on for a quarter of an hour before the Russians struck back with a bang late in the half, to put away four goals in as many minutes to take a 4-1 lead at the break.

The Russians struck early in the second half to make it 5-1 before once again, Australia showed their fighting spirit to hold out their more favoured opponents for 12 minutes before their concentration was penetrated in a big way as Russia put home another five goals in just six minutes.

The Russians had eight individual scorers with Dmitry

BRAZIL SET RECORD TO CRUISE IN GROUP A

As expected Brazil finished atop of Group A however the tournament favourites showed just why they have yet to lose a Futsal World Cup after setting a record for the biggest win and the highest ever score in any FIFA tournament after humiliating the hosts 29-2 in the final game of the group.

The result was never in doubt as Brazil scored their first seven goals in just eight minutes. Their dominance was reflected through an amazing total of 102 shots at goal during the 40 minute match.

Leading 13-0 early in the second half, the hosts looked to have put some respectability on the board with a couple of quick goals, however the hosts were penalised for scoring against the South Americans, who vented their anger by racking up 16 goals in 10 minutes.

Manoel Tobias scored six goals, Fininho picked up a meager five goals, including three in a two minute spell while Schumacher, Anderson, Falcao and Vander all picked up hat-tricks.

Portugal were the second placed team in the group after they went through with two wins and a loss, that coming against Brazil 4-0.

DUTCH DELIGHT IN DOMINANTING GROUP B

Netherlands finished atop of Group B after winning all three-group games and were joined by Egypt in the next round.

STYLISH SPAIN SWEEP GROUP D

Spain continued the superb form shown by European teams by winning group D ahead of Argentina.

Spain have yet to drop a match in, after disposing of Argentina 3-0.

BRAZIL, RUSSIA AND SPAIN IMPRESS IN PHASE TWO

By Daniel Giorelando

Brazil, Russia and Spain have shown why they look like certain semi-finalists after convincing wins in their opening matches in the second group phase of the Futsal World Cup in Guatemala.

The Spanish, finalists in the last Futsal World Cup final in 1996, have already qualified for the Semis after winning both of their phase two matches defeating both Croatia 5-0 and Portugal 3-1 in Group F.

Spain, who are so far undefeated, disposed of Croatia with three goals in the first 12 minutes of play in their match on Saturday while Portugal were swept aside with two goals in the opening two minutes.

Portugal, after a surprise first up 3-1 win over the Netherlands in phase two, must defeat Croatia, who will also go through to the Semis with a win.

While Spain are already into the Semi's, the red hot favourites Brazil, look set to make it four championships in a row, after crushing all before them, including a 12-4 win over Egypt in their first game in round two.

The Brazilians, helped by a hat-trick from Manoel Tobias, comfortably outclassed a side which is expected to be the weakest of the three in Group E, one which also contains Russia and bitter rivals Argentina.

A competitive Argentinean outfit was overun by Russia 7-1, with the South Americans conceeding five goals in the last four minutes.

Brazil and Argentina will renew their rivalry on Monday night (Guatemala time) in a match that is expected to be overflowing with the passion and commitment that is notorious with all sporting events between the two neighbouring nations.

Spain's Paulo Roberto (10) holds off Croatia's Culjak.

On the same night, Russia will be looking to cement their spot in the semi-finals with a win over Egypt.

If the remaining teams and results in phase two. go true to form, Friday's Semi-finals (Guatemala time) will set up two fascinating match-ups, with an all European battle in Semi-final one between Spain and Russia, with Brazil and either Croatia or Portugal to battle in Semi-final two.

Portugal's Vitinha is fouled by Lettinck Henry of Holland.

The final of the fourth ever Futsal World Cup will be held next Monday morning (Sydney time).

GROUP E

Team	P	W	D	L	F:A	Pts
Brazil	1	1	0	0	12:4	3
Russia	1	1	0	0	7:1	3
Egypt	1	0	0	1	1:7	0
Argentina	1	0	0	1	4:12	0

26-11-00	*[25]*	*Russia*	*7*	*Argentina*	*1*
26-11-00	*[26]*	*Brazil*	*12*	*Egypt*	*4*
27-11-00	[29]	Egypt	vs	Russia	
27-11-00	[30]	Argentina	vs	Brazil	
29-11-00	[33]	Egypt	vs	Argentina	
29-11-00	[34]	Brazil	vs	Russia	

GROUP F

Team	P	W	D	L	F:A	Pts
Spain	2	2	0	0	8:1	6
Portugal	2	1	0	1	4:4	3
Croatia	2	1	0	1	5:7	3
N'lands	2	0	0	2	3:8	0

25-11-00	*[27]*	*N'lands*	*1*	*Portugal*	*3*
25-11-00	*[28]*	*Spain*	*5*	*Croatia*	*0*
26-11-00	*[32]*	*Croatia*	*5*	*N'lands*	*2*
26-11-00	*[31]*	*Portugal*	*1*	*Spain*	*3*
28-11-00	[36]	Portugal	vs.	Croatia	
28-11-00	[35]	N'lands	vs.	Spain	

SEMI FINALS

01-12-00	Winner F	vs	2nd Place E
01-12-00	Winner E	vs	2nd Place F

3RD/4TH PLACE

03-12-00	Loser Semi	vs	Loser Semi

WORLD CUP FINAL

03-12-00	Winner Semi	vs	Winner Semi

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Blues travel North to Epping to find Support

NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Melbourne's most talked-about club Carlton will play its second match at Epping Stadium on Sunday and may have found a home base in the northern suburbs, writes Victorian editor Bert van Bedaf.

Like a satisfied customer, who's discovered the perfect spot, Carlton is coming back for more at Epping Stadium in Melbourne's outer-suburban north.

Although its 3-1 win over Eastern Pride last Sunday week was overshadowed by the celebrated goal posts farce, the most positive result was the 3,000-strong crowd and the idea that the nomadic Blues can look forward to something that may begin to resemble a home and supporter base.

Holding the match at Epping has shown where Carlton's future lies in garnering support. There were 3,187 spectators at the boutique stadium, which would need to be upgraded to NSL standards, if it were to be used as a Carlton base.

Twice as many spectators turned up at Epping as at matches last season when Carlton played at Olympic Park and in recent weeks at Bob Jane Stadium.

Carlton's executive consultant and former federal independent politician Phil Cleary was jubilant. "There was lots of excitement and we got double the crowd," Cleary said. "What the game proved was that there is an enormous potential supporter base in the northern suburbs. We want to play here again for our next home game," he added and his wish has been granted.

The Blues will play their next home match at Epping on Sunday, December 3, against Northern Spirit.

Carlton doesn't want a repeat of the embarrassment against Pride, when the match was delayed for 98 minutes because the goal frames weren't properly secured to the ground and pegs had to be found.

"This time, we'll have those posts stuck in the ground with concrete," Cleary promised.

Referee Craig Zetter had decided the match could not start as long as the goal frames weren't safely secured to the ground, because it could endanger the players' safety.

Resident club Melbourne Raiders was dumbfounded. Finally, sizeable pegs were found at co-tenant Whittlesea Stallions. The goals were correctly secured to the ground and the game kicked off 98 minutes late.

As the drama unfolded, NSL manager Stefan Kamasz was alerted in Sydney.

"I'm not happy the match was delayed over something that was pointed out to Carlton well before. It was one of the issues our league official (Vicky Juric) had raised (with the club). We've got different standards to the Victorian leagues. The referee said he wasn't prepared to risk the safety of the players," Kamasz said.

Cleary denied this. "Vicky Juric checked the ground (earlier in the week). We asked her to put in writing what had to be fixed (for the match to go ahead). The goal posts weren't mentioned at all in her letter," he said.

Melbourne Raiders vice-president Ross Follacchio said the pegs had been Carlton's problem. "The Melbourne Raiders were not responsible. We were only responsible for the catering. We supported Carlton as much as we could, but the full responsibility (for the pegs) goes to Carlton," Follacchio said.

Follachio said the club had fitted 20 more pegs in each goal to secure the nets before the match. At four o'clock the goals were deemed safe.

Carlton 'keeper Dean Anastasiadis had tested the frames by jumping on them.

Half an hour later the goals were declared unsafe.

A frantic search ensued to locate so-called U-pegs. Six pegs were found and three were used in each goal to pin the frames to the ground in addition to the two existing pegs already holding down each goal, Follachio explained.

"I'm still lost for words, why the game was delayed for 90 minutes," Follacchio said.

During the week following the match, Eastern Pride considered lodging an appeal with Soccer Australia over the peg debacle and delay in a bid to be awarded three points instead of Carlton. But upon advice later in the week, Pride decided against it.

"We won't be challenging the result of the game. We're extremely disappointed that we don't have a leg to stand on," Pride's chief executive officer Peter Quirk said.

Quirk said the club would be writing a letter of complaint to Soccer Australia.

"We regard the matter as an unacceptable situation to occur at such a level and it leaves questions if it can ever happen again," Quirk said.

Epping may be good enough for Victorian Premier League and State League soccer and as an Olympic training venue, it did show quite a few teething problems for the bigger league. The sizeable (but still modest) crowd (compared with other clubs) drew out other shortcomings at Epping, including limited seating (only in the small grand stand) and a single entry and exit route, causing a jam.

There's only one roadway, serving as entry and exit to the car park, making the coming and going to and from the stadium a frustrating affair.

The game was already delayed by 15 minutes to allow the growing queue of spectators into the stadium. Cars were banked up waiting to get into the car park.

But the experiment also showed the northern suburbs of Melbourne voted positively and enthusiastically for a Carlton presence in their region.

"When Carlton scored, the whole stadium was cheering for the Blues," Follachio said.

It was the sweetest sound Carlton's heard in its fourth year of existence.

Carlton executive consultant Phil Cleary:

"What the game proved was that there is an enormous potential supporter base in the northern suburbs."

"Carlton is not suggesting that Epping Stadium should become the club's home ground. Rather, it wants to take three or four games a year to the stadium and play its other home matches at a central venue."

Dundee's Peter Marr (left) shakes on a deal with Carlton's Peter Jess. Links between the two clubs have been instigated.

Epping Stadium when Carlton defeated Eastern Pride 3-1.

"The South Melbourne soccer club is not working fast enough. I'm getting a bit sick of them."

"Sharing Bob Jane stadium with South Melbourne would be like being a second class citizen."

CARLTON EYES OPTUS OVAL, AGAIN

By Bert van Bedaf

Carlton is unhappy playing at Bob Jane Stadium and is eyeing Optus Oval again as an alternative venue in addition to Epping stadium and possibly Colonial Stadium.

"Carlton is not suggesting that Epping stadium should become the club's home ground. Rather, it wants to take three or four games a year to the stadium and play its other home matches (about a dozen) at a central venue," Carlton executive consultant Phil Cleary said.

"We've spoken with representatives of Parks Victoria (government department that controls Albert Park) in relation to playing at Bob Jane Stadium (located next to Albert Park lake). Unfortunately, the final paper work is yet to be signed," he said.

Cleary said he'd also spoken with Ian Collins, the executive officer at Colonial stadium, with a view of playing a future game at Melbourne's newest venue.

Phil Cleary

Significantly, Cleary is unhappy with South Melbourne, who he believes are dragging their feet over Carlton becoming a co-tenant at Bob Jane Stadium.

"The South Melbourne soccer club is not working fast enough. I'm getting a bit sick of them," Cleary said.

"Sharing Bob Jane stadium with South Melbourne would be like being a second class citizen," he said.

He said the club was considering returning to Optus Oval, where it all began for Carlton as an extention of the Carlton Football Club. With Colonial stadium competing for Australian Rules matches, Optus Oval is in danger of being underused.

"Carlton (FC) is desperate to have the ground used. It may be the smart thing to do. We've got to have a home," Cleary said.

Marconi's Youth Team Off To Viareggio 2000

By John Economos

MARCONI's Youth team next year and for the sixth consecutive time, will compete in Europe's longest staged and most prestigious Youth tournament, at Viareggio in Italy, the 'Copa Carnevale' that will be contested from February 26th through to March 6th.

This will be the 53rd consecutive Viareggio Tournament staged, at which the Creme de la Creme of Europe's most talented Youth assemble.

Recently Club Marconi staged a huge fund-raising dinner to assist with financing the air-lift and accommodation expenses of Coach Jean Paul de Marigny's Youth team's crusade to Italy.

The Viareggio tournament will provide an extremely important experience for Marconi's Youth as some of the World's greatest names in soccer in years gone by have played in it.

The same applies for clubs that have participated such as AC Milan, Fiorentina, Glasgow Rangers, Torino, Manchester United, Lazio, Hadjuk Split, AS Roma, Juventus and of course Marconi.

Clubs from 12 countries were represented earlier this year at this tournament that included Australia, Italy, Brazil, Croatia, Denmark, Israel, Libya, Mexico, Nigeria, South Africa and Switzerland and the United States.

Some of the world's Superstars have launched their illustrious careers at Viareggio and have included Gabriel Batistuta, Zvonimir Boban, Alessandro Del Piero, Paolo Rossi and Manchester United's right defender Phil Neville.

Marconi's 19997 team at Viareggio actually played against the Manchester United Youth team that was captained by Phil Neville and were extremely unlucky to concede to United a final minute equaliser to the English giants that saw the match end in a 1-1 draw after Marconi's robust midfielder Mark Robertson had opened the score in the 32nd minute.

Marconi's success in this tournament in the past six years can be illustrated through a list of achievement with its participation at Viareggio.

Some of the players that have worn the Marconi shirt at this tournament have been Mark Robertson (Swindon Town), Danny Invincibile (Swindon Town), Daniel Severino (Perugia), Buddy Farah (Marconi first team), Darren McDonald (Marconi first team) Christian Care (Marconi first team), Mark Hagger (Canberra Cosmos), Jon Angelucci Canberra Cosmos), Les Pogliacomi (Parramatta Power).

The Viareggio tournament has definently played a significant part in Youth Development Progamme.

Other Australian players — not from Marconi that have participated in the magnificent tournament in years gone by have been Former Sydney Olympic sweeper Kenny Wilson, when he represented Glasgow Rangers at three consecutive Viareggio tournaments in the early 70's as well as the Perth Glory's former International striker Alistair Edwards who played at three consecutive tournaments also with the Glasgow Rangers.

At the Marconi fundraising dinner 10 prizes were raffled off to raise urgently needed funds to help finance next February's expedition to Viareggio.

Marconi's Soccer Secretary Mr Frank Labbozzetta stated to ABSW last night: "Our club is extremely proud that once again we have been invited by the Tournaments Organisers to participate again.

"The international experience and professional environment that The Marconi Youth team is exposed to at Viareggio is of immense value to out Youth players in furthering their careers," ended my Labbozetta.

Winner of the First Prize, the Brescia 'Poltroarredo Leather Lounge Suite', Mr Vince Lettieri (Coach of Marconi's Under 17s) being congratulated by Major Sponsor, Mr Tony Brescia.

Jean Paul de Marigny, Marconi's Youth team coach that will be in charge at the 'Viareggio Youth Tournament'.

Mrs Anabalon, Winner of the 2nd prize, a trip to Europe courtesey of Alitalia, being presented with her ticket by Director of Club Marconi, Mr Domenico Labbozzetta.

The magnificent 1st prize, the 'Poltroarredo Leather Lounge Suite', donated by Brescia Furniture which was won by Mr Vince Lettieri.

Assistant Editor and Sports Journalist of La Fiamma, Mr Gianluca Buttarello with his vivacious wife, Nicoletta.

Standing centre table, Marconi's Soccer Secretary, Mr Frank Labbozzetta at the dinner table of former Marconi's vice president, Mr Frank Baroni with his family.

Frank Labbozzetta: Marconi Soccer Secretary.

TRIBUTE THANKS

Dear Sir,

Many thanks for affording us this opportunity to print a letter of gratitude to the many people who attended Geoff's funeral on Friday 13th October, 2000.

It has been a tremendous shock to us all as you can imagine, and we could not have begun to thank all the people who have expressed their sympathy and sent such wonderful messages of understanding. We needed to enlist your help because we do not have addresses for the majority of people and to leave our "thanks" unsaid would be unthinkable.

I trust that you do not think us too presumptuous in assuming you would put our letter to print, but I understand that Tony Henderson has already spoken to you about the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Bob & Sue Gunning,

Note: *Please see page 5 ("Good Oil").*

Bob and Sue, ABSW is always happy to assist in whatever way possible, more exceptionally when it involves such a tragic loss. We wish you and your family the very best for the future. We are honoured that you thought of us to enlist some help. – ***Ed.***

Geoff Gunning: Tragic

Letters to the Editor

CONSPIRACY THEORY

Dear Sir,

I would like to voice my opinion about the situation with Channel 7. We all know Channel 7 bought soccer for 10 years and we also know you have put it in the cupboard.

They have also done this with other personalities i.e. Jana Wendt, Channel 9, A Current Affair, almost destroying her career. I wonder if Channel 7 want to destroy soccer because Channel 9 have bought the media rights for the next World Cup. It could be Channel 9 and Channel 7 are doing this to eradicate Soccer from our Channels in Australia.

When David Hill sold Soccer to Channel 7 for 10 years many people suggested not to do so as 10 years is too long a period. He also said when Channel 7 signed the contract — he had no say and was not interested as to when Channel 7 could televise the soccer.

Result being that the soccer is being televised at midnight or the early hours of the morning. I am conveying my opinion to announce that ABC will takeover SBS and this will be the end of our soccer.

I also think the Federation is making a mistake of putting pressure on all the clubs who are barely surviving. Anyone can manage a club if you have a lot of money.

I think we should try to work hard to keep the spectators that we already have.

Without the media we have no future. With the new regulations that the Federation want to bring in next year no club will survive and we will lose all the spectators we have now.

Matthew Dragsetti,
Blacktown. NSW.

Wow, Channel 7 and channel 9 in cahoots! This is like a Mel Gibson action thriller!! – ***Ed.***

Perkins reply

Dear Sir,

"Hell hath no fury like the friends of a political correct icon scorned."

I refer to the predictably hysterical "frothing at the mouth" criticism of me over my prank assessment of Charlie Perkins' life in soccer.

Rather than me apologise my critics should apologise to me for distorting my comments. I specifically avoided commenting on Mr Charles Perkins the controversial headline grabbing Aboriginal activists, former public servant millionaire businessman wheeler dealer and all the rest. My comments only related to Charlie Perkins involvement with soccer.

If Charlie Perkins had not been a high profile Aboriginal, his soccer career would not have rated a mention. Just like all the other countless ordinary (as well as sadly most of the letter) players of the last 120 years.

As far as I can recollect during the time I am alluding to Perkins' soccer career was not curtailed by illness.

Charlie Perkins

Perkins soccer CV of 40 years reads well but what did it all amount to in advancing the course of Aussie soccer.

As I have previously stated, other people have contributed much more for little or no recognition. They also had a great love and devotion for the game like Charlie Perkins.

I rest my case and will not make anymore comments on this subject other than to say my description of Perkins as a "very" ordinary player was a bit too harsh. Ordinary was the more appropriate description.

Yours in soccer,

R. Melor
Bondi, NSW.

Your case rested on seems very flimsy indeed. As mentioned by ABSW in a prior edition, we suggest you either re-read the articles in question or do some research. Better yet, do both! – ***Ed.***

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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or Fax: 9550 9332 ● 9564 1224

AUSSIES AROUND THE GLOBE

With Arvind Hickman ***Did you know that there are over 100 Australian soccer players plying their trade in many of the top leagues around the world? Every year new names emerge on the world stage, painting the picture of green and gold into a portrait of global recognition Aussie Around The Globe is our weekly look at the exploits of these players and their performance.***

Leeds United star, Harry Kewell, hopes to make an early comeback against Lazio in the Champions League two weeks from now.

Kewell's recovery has been nothing short of remarkable, as he previously wasn't expected to play until the start of the next year.

Kewell's return is sure to boost a Leeds team already stricken with injury problems.

Former Newcastle Breakers player, Chad Mansley, has failed to secure a contract with Watford despite impressing during his trial period.

Watford manager, Graham Taylor would not be surprised if Mansley is successful, but can not find a place for the young striker in his team.

England: Premier League: John Aloisi came on as a substitute and set up Coventry's equalising gaol against Aston Villa at Highfield Road.

Mark Schwarzer played a full game as Middelsbrough drew at home to Bradford City 2-2, while Danny Tiatto was on the subs bench as Manchester City lost to Ipswich 2-3.

Last Week:

England: Division One: LG Socceroo Stan Lazaridis came off the bench at half-time, as Birmingham City beat Burnley 3-2 at home. Kevin Muscat played a full game, as Wolverhampton Wanderers lost 1-0 away to Blackburn Rovers.

Harry Kewell: Finally back in training

For Rovers, John Filan (gk) remained on the bench.

Jason Kearton (gk) played a full game, as Crewe Alexandra lost 2-1 at home to Stockport., while Shaun Murphy played a full match as Sheffield United beat Grimsby 3-2 at home.

Scotland: Tony Vidmar played a full game as Rangers drew 0-0 away to Dunfermline.

Belgium: Vilson Knezevic (gk) played a full game, as Germinal Beerschot beat FC Antwerp 2-1 away from home.

LG Socceroo Josip Skoko played a full match, as Racing Genk drew 0-0 at home with Lokeren.

Croatia: Eddy Bosnar played a full game, as Dinamo Zagreb thumped Hrvatski Dragovoljac 5-0 away from home., while Ante Milicic came off the bench in the 55th minute, as Rijeka was thrashed 6-1 away to Varteks.

Holland: Brett Emerton played a full match, and scored his first goals in the Dutch first division in the 36th and 59th minutes, while National team-mate Stephen Laybutt remained on the bench, as Feyenoord beat NEC 3-1 away from home.

France: LG Socceroo Mile Sterjovski came off the bench in the 83rd minute, as Lille beat Lyon 1-0 away from home.

Greece: Bill Damianos came off the bench in the 87th minute, as Xanthi beat Paniliakos 2-0 at home.

Kyriakos Tohouroglou (gk) played a game, as PAOK drew 2-2 at home with Panathinaikos.

Brett Emerton: First goals in Holland.

Italy: Serie B: Olympian Marco Bresciano played a full match, as Empoli beat Siena 2-0 at home.

Olympian Vince Grella played a full match, as Ternana drew 2-2 away to Ravenna.

Trials and Transfers: Marconi Stallions wing-back Chad Gibson will be loaned to Norwegian first division Club F.K. Bodo/Glimt from January, until the end of the 2001 Norwegian season.

LG Socceroo Pablo Cardozo will be weighing up his options, with news that his short-term contract with Greek First Division side Athinaikos will reportedly not be renewed. Fifteen year old Mason Palmieri, formerly with ex NSL Club Newcastle Breakers, has transferred to English Second Division side Bristol City.

West Australian David Willey has moved to FC Creglingen in Germany.

George Rutherford has moved from Victorian clubside Melton to Liberton Royal Mail in Scotland.

Andrew Wendleborn has moved from Adelaide Hills Hawks to Lancing, in England . Lancing is a small non-league club which plays in the Sussex League 1st Division.

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

ADELAIDE CITY 1
NEWCASTLE UNITED 1

By Allan Crisp

Aurelio Vidmar filled his captaincy cup to its capacity by coming off the substitutes' bench to rescue a precious point for Adelaide City in its 1-1 draw with feisty Newcastle United last Friday night.

Vidmar struck a 73rd minute goal 15 minutes after entering the fray to level the ledger, established by a well-taken penalty by John Buonavoglia 21 minutes earlier.

Those goals broke the personal scoring droughts for the season of both talented players and are likely to prove turning points in the fortunes of both clubs.

In only his second appearance for the 2000-2001 campaign, Vidmar proved he has fully recovered from a debilitating groin injury and he displayed his versatility by starting as a front runner before switching to the midfield after the 74th minute introduction of striker Claudio Pelosi.

Little "Jockey" Buonavoglia, down on form in previous games without his constant supplier Andy Harper, rediscovered his jaunty confidence once he found the back of the net, albeit at the risk of later failing to follow the tactical instructions of United coach Lee Sterrey.

City supremo Zoran Matic, who was Sterrey's mentor at Marconi, begged to differ on the merits of the penalty awarded by Adelaide-based referee Craig Zetter.

Sterrey was in little doubt that his defender Todd McManus, who has the habit of standing in front of his opposing goalkeeper at corner kicks, was shoved aside by Force custodian Adrian Cagalj as the crowded players jostled for position.

Cagalj was instantly yellow carded and the spot-kick awarded by young whistler Zetter.

Vidmar's equaliser came as the result of some inventive teamwork from Scott Tunbridge, whose pass was cleverly back-heeled to the left of the box where the captain gleefully roofed his drive.

Matic said later he was happy to get a point after trailing. "Newcastle are very well organised and it's very hard to break them down," he said.

Carl Veart: Great performance.

Sterrey took the opposite view, stating that he was disappointed not to nail a win. "Apart from (Louis) Brain hitting the crossbar, I think we had the better scoring chances," Sterry said.

Matic then drew laughter from the assembled media at the post-match conference when asked by "Sunday Mail" writer Val Migliacchio if he thought seven cautions was an excessive number. "You were lucky not to get booked yourself," Matic said

Having collected four points from its last two games, United are on a roll and Sterrey sees blue skies from now on.

"Zoran didn't want to pay the money for Anthony Magnacca (from South Melbourne) so we snapped him up and we still have "Harps" (Andy Harper) and Esala Masi to come back," Sterrey said.

Match statistics show that City had 18 shots on goal to United's 10, with 6-2 in favour of the home team for shots on target, while the Force penetrated the penalty area 39 times to 17 by Newcastle.

The memorable moments were fewer than at the recent home games at Hindmarsh Stadium, but Carl Veart's silky midfield skills were classical, while big Bob Catlin did his best to record his 100th NSL shut-out.

A 30-metre drive in the 29th minute from Jim Kent brought a great save from Cagalj, before Brain, released by Brad Hassell, rocketed a drive under the crossbar and back into play five minutes later.

A wild attacking flurry from City two minutes before half time was climaxed as Veart's rifled shot was deflected wide and Fabrizio Bucciarelli headed narrowly off target.

Another City defender, Ante Kovacevic was denied by a splendid goalline clearance from United skipper Glen Sprod just two minutes after the restart.

The ball was whisked to the opposite end in a typical breakaway, but former City youngster Travis Dodd bombed an absolute sitter.

Andy Roberts, Sprod, Catlin and McManus were defensive towers, while Dan McBreen, Dodd and Brad Wieczorek were dangerous customers.

Veart, Sabljak, Kovacevic and Bucciarelli were the pick of City's experienced men, along with Vidmar, while Ivan Karlovic, Tunbridge and Brain were relentless rookies.

Pantelis also shone, but too often spoiled his work by beating a player and then attempting an encore.

EASTERN PRIDE 0
MARCONI STALLIONS 0

By Jodie Newell

The losing streak ended for Eastern Pride over the weekend, when the game finished in a 0-0 draw against Marconi. In one of the clubs better performances for the season, Pride was able to play a consistent 90 minutes of soccer.

The game started well for Eastern Pride, with Brian MacNichol and Daniel Watkins up front, and the inclusion of Ante Deak gave Pride much needed legs in midfield.

Deak figured in two plays within five minutes, the first a well taken free kick just veering left of the Marconi keeper David Aceski. The second was a combination of Deak and Watkins, in the penalty area with Watkins unable to connect from Deak's pass.

Marconi appeared unsettled in the early stages and didn't relax until the 21st minute mark with Simon Bell beginning to feature in the game.

Chad Gibson had the best chance of Marconi's half when he broke free and had a chance to beat Pride keeper Eugene Galekovic, but his shot was sprayed wide.

The half ended 0-0.

Marconi began the half with much more vigour and threatened the Pride defence.

James Afkos and Buddy Farah were beginning to come into the game, but for the resolute defensive work of Manny Gotis and Paul Wearne, the Stallions were kept out.

Mark Babic for Marconi had a chance to gain the lead, but keeper Galekovic for Pride kept the shot out. Dong Ki Kim who was yellow carded early in the match was sent off for a crude tackle, and will miss the next game. Down to 10 men, Pride coped well and at times pushed forward, but the Marconi numbers at the back held firm and the game ended at 0-0 .

Both coaches were reasonably satisfied with the result. Pride coach Hopkins was pleased. "It was one of our better performances for the year. We put together, what I would call, a very consistent performance. Our concentration was there, we didn't let the opposing side score through mistakes and it gives us something to build on for next week's game against Melbourne Knights."

Marconi coach Eddie Krncevic was also pleased to come away with a point. "I'm pleased just as much as Jeff is, to get out of this game with a point." It's always tough here and to leave with something is always a bonus." Krncevic was impressed with Eastern Pride's game, "Don't worry about this team (Pride) they'll surprise a few teams this year."

Chad Gibson: Game's best chance.

AUCKLAND KINGZ 0
CARLTON SC 0

Carlton skipper Andrew Marth was twice denied by the woodwork as the Blues played out a scoreless draw in Auckland last night.

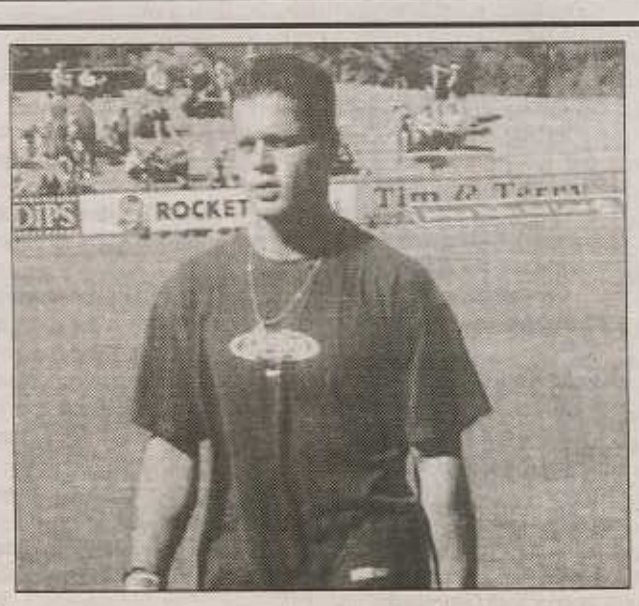
Both Dean Anastasiadis and Kingz 'keeper Chris Marsh were in inspired form and kept the scores deadlockedwith a string of outstanding saves.

Twice Anastasiadis produced top drawer efforts to turn away volleys from Kingz player-coach Wynton Rufer.

Andy Packer and Archie Thompson also found no way through Marsh as both Blues players were denied twice each by the young Kiwi.

But the major talking point from the game was Marth's bad luck in front of goal.

Midway through the first-half, the Blues captain saw his header from a corner thump back off Marsh's crossbar.



Dean Anastasiadis: Super match.

Then in the shadows of half-time, "Stabber" was again left ruing his luck having seen his intelligent deflection of John Markovski's free-kick cannon off a post.

After the game, Kingz skipper Harry Ngata admitted that his team were happy with a point:

"It was a very hard game for us, they were a very good defensive unit and that shows by having one of our international players Sean Douglas on the bench for them.

"This was a tough game for us, but still it is good to get a point rather than none.

"We've still got to start getting points because the longer we go without getting maximum points the further it gets away from us."

Carlton winger Rob Middleby — returning to his former club for the first time — added, "We've got to be happy to get a point away from home, we knew this would be tough because they were coming off a 5-1 loss to Perth last week.

"But it was weird playing against these guys. I do miss Auckland, but it certainly felt weird in the first half."

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 2
CANBERRA COSMOS 3

By Arvind Hickman

NSL front runners, Wollongong Wolves have been upset by the Canberra Cosmos 3-2 at WIN Stadium on a wet Friday night.

A Jon Angelucci double underlined a gutsy performance by the Cosmos in a game of contrasting halves.

Wollongong were often found wanting in attack without the penetration of Scott Chipperfield, on trial in England, and suspended flanker Dino Menillo. Their lack of depth on the bench and ill discipline could prove their Achilles heel this season if this game was anything to go by.

Canberra on the other hand, showed a lot of promise in the second half with some crisp one touch passing and dogged pressing in defence. They could provide a handful for most teams in such form.

The Cosmos coach, Tommy Sermanni, was pleased with his team's second half performance.

"The first 30 minutes of the first half I thought we allowed Wollongong to basically dictate the game and you can't do that against a team of such quality. I had a few words to say about certain individuals at half time and we came out and started very well and Wollongong, I think, came out and started a bit slowly," he said.

"When we have good possession and we are playing well, we have a more potent strike force this year than we have had in previous times."

Wolves coach, Ron Corry, thought that a lack of depth and ill discipline, highlighted by Saso Petrovski's late red card, cost his side tonight.

"It was a game of two halves, we probably could have turned two or three at half time, but we didn't and the players didn't play to instructions in the second half. It was a very undisciplined performance by our players, but then again you've got to give Canberra credit," he said.

"We haven't bought any players this year at all so that tells a story on its own.

"We're now going to loose a couple more because of ill discipline. This is what the club has to face when you don't have the numbers."

Wollongong didn't look like an under strength outfit at the start of the game however.

The Wolves dominated for most of the first half and should have been a goal ahead after only a couple of minutes when Paul Reid snuffed a golden opportunity with just the keeper to beat.

Their first goal came in the 16th minute when David Huxley latched onto a low Saso Petrovski cross, caressing the ball to the left of keeper Barney Smith. Petrovski provided the ball after a teasing run down the left flank.

Paul Reid almost doubled the advantage when his drive shaved the cross bar from 30 metres out.

Canberra could hardly muster an opportunity until the dying stages of the first half when a Shane Lyons shot was saved point blank by Wolves keeper Grant Barlow.

It only took the Cosmos 30 seconds after play resumed in the second half to level the ledger. Alex Castro was allowed far too much time and space around the penalty area and placed his shot to the right of keeper Barlow.

This sparked the Cosmos into life and they started to dominate with some fluid one touch football and possesion.

It seemed inevitable a second goal was on the cards and it eventually arrived in the 64th minute via the boot of Jon Angelucci, a product of the Illawarra region.

A Cosmos corner fell nicely for Angelucci who blasted his first shot into a defender before placing the rebound in between keeper and defender on the post.

Angelucci then sealed Wollongong's fate two minutes later after Castro flashed a low ball across the goal face, for the striker to tuck away. Questions must be raised however, over the Wolves slack marking.

John Angelucci: Double strike.

Angelucci should have had a hat-rick moments later after escaping the off-side trap and chipping past keeper Barlow, but George Souris cleared just in the nick of time.

Saso Petrovski added some respectability into the scoreline only minutes before the final whistle when he produced a brilliant turning volley from a tight angle.

Only moments later the striker undid his good work by receiving a red card for a second bookable offence.

Wollongong's undefeated record this season comes to an end, while the Cosmos gain three valuable points and even more in confidence.

NORTHERN SPIRIT 2
PERTH GLORY 0

By Julian Murphy

The Northern Spirit delivered a warning to the other NSL clubs that they are not to be taken lightly after a hard fought 2-0 home win over the Perth Glory.

The Sydneysiders had to battle until the end to secure the three points with a rare off night for the Glory's Damian Mori contributing to the demise of last seasons minor premiers.

The victory was the 90 minute performance that player-coach Graham Arnold had been looking for. Lapses in concentration in earlier games against Sydney United and the Adelaide Force had seen Arnie's men drop valuable points but they toiled until the final whistle to frustrate the Glory attack.

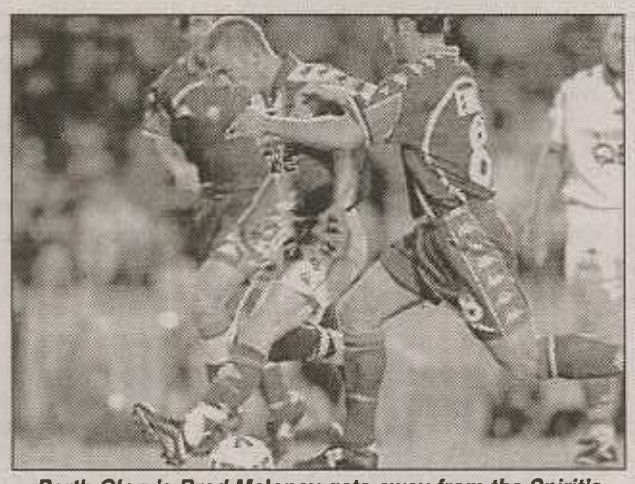
Two superb individual goals from Spirit marksmen Alex Moreira and Ben Burgess secured the win for the home side as their opposition failed to capitalise on their opportunities. The Spirit's striking duo are forging a solid understanding in front of goal and appear to be a combination capable of consigning their club's scoring problems to the past.

Moreira was arguably the best player on the park in the first half, his 26th minute goal worth the price of admission alone. The ex-Carlton man skipped past three Glory defenders before cracking a left-foot shot inside the left post. He then continued to menace the Glory defence for the remainder of the opening stanza.

The burly Brazilian faded from the game in the second half just as Burgess,' influence on proceedings grew and the young striker doubled his teams lead in the 58th minute. A moment of hesitation by Perth's Shane Pryce allowed Burgess to steal the ball, charge towards Glory custodian Jason Petkovic and fire home his fifth goal of the season.

It could have been a different story if Mori and Gary Faria weren't both denied by the crossbar within seconds on the stroke of half-time. Mori also squandered a handful of other chances, directing free headers well wide of the target on more than one occasion.

Burgess and Moreira may be grabbing the headlines but the Spirit defence deserves plenty of kudos for preventing the potent Glory from registering on the scoreboard.



Perth Glory's Brad Maloney gets away from the Spirit's Robbie Enes.

Arnold was again a tower of strength at sweeper as he tirelessly urged on his charges. His presence was priceless as the visitors pressed forward for extended periods throughout the contest. It was the Spirit's fourth clean sheet in seven games, an achievement the likes of Arnold, Matt Bingley, Michael Cunico and Paul Henderson can be proud of.

Craig Foster made his long awaited debut at North Sydney Oval, throwing himself in to the game from the outset and drawing a caution from the referee in only the second minute. The former Crystal Palace midfielder was the dominant figure in the centre of the park although injuries to Glory's Brad Maloney and Gareth Naven saw them depart from the game much earlier than their team-mates would have liked.

Perth were by no means outplayed by the stoic Spirit but coach Bernd Stange will be concerned at their inability to land many shots on target. The Glory's best player Scott Miller and Robert Trajkovski worked hard down the flanks but the Spirit managed to hack clear most of their balls into the penalty box. The German gaffer will undoubtedly be including the conquering Spirit in his end of season calculations after this defeat.

Arnold has many reasons to feel quietly confident about the rest of the campaign and if his squad isn't again ravaged by injuries they could well be right up there come finals time. With Robbie Slater and Noel Spencer still to come back in to the side the Spirit has a side that can match it with the league big guns and a win over quality opposition such as Perth will definitely boost their confidence.

"This really was a six point game for us. A loss would have seen us further down at the wrong end of the table but after this result we're up there," Arnold said after the game.

"What is really pleasing is that we held our shape and our discipline well," he ended.

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 0

By Tony Tannous

A winner three minutes into injury time from substitute George Goutzioulis on Sunday night at Belmore moved Sydney Olympic three points clear at the top of the table. It also preserved their unblemished home record and left them as the only undefeated side after seven rounds.

But while Simon Micallef's final whistle brought scenes of joy from Olympic and its 6000-odd followers, it was sheer despair and despondency for the gallant Melbourne Knights, who slumped to the Belmore turf and were left largely inconsolable.

They'd clearly come to Sydney for a share of the points and, in the end, this defensive mindset probably brought about their undoing.

Against any other side the Knights may have got away with a point or all three, but against a team with its tail up and confidence flowing, it was always going to be difficult to hold out till the end.

Despite this not being one of Olympic's most polished nights of the year, it was another sign that the character and will-to-win at Belmore has rarely been this great.

While other sides may have been worried about committing too many men forward in the late stages for fear of getting hit on the counter-attack, Branko Culina's men continued to press. And, for the second week running, they were rewarded with a late winner.

From a free-kick won on Olympic's left and taken by the mercurial Troy Halpin, Goutzioulis rose tallest in a crowded box to head past Knights custodian Lupce Acevski.

Goutzioulis and his teammates almost completed a lap of honour in celebration. At the other end, the Knights players dropped like ninepins, faces buried in hands.

Despite obviously being distraught, Knights coach Vlado Vanis was philosophical enough to admit after the game that Olympic deserved its victory.

"Maybe they deserved this win a little bit earlier than the last second," he said.

Indeed, Olympic had chances throughout, but were thwarted each time by desperate defending, brilliant goalkeeping, poor finishing or just sheer bad luck.

Most of the bad luck fell to Halpin. As early as the seventh minute, he was denied by Acevski's left-hand post after latching onto a rasping volley from the edge of the18 yard box.

Moments before half time, Halpin, after skipping past a challenge on the left and shaping his shot around Acevski, was again denied by the same post.

While the Knights had the better of the first 20 minutes, winning plenty of ball in midfield and troubling Olympic's defence with its mobility and pace up front, they failed to create many chances and Olympic duly took control.

The second half told a similar tale, with Olympic making all the running and the Knights threatening on the counter attack.

But Olympic was up against a formidable wall of red shirts, marshaled well by sweeper Rody Vargas and led superbly by 21-year-old stopper Sash Ognenovski.

Even attackers Adrian Cervinski and Alex Kiratzoglou spent most of the second period camped behind the ball.

And when the Knights did break, they created two great chances, one scuffed wide by midfielder Andy Vargas, the second a left-foot volley from striker Joel Porter from six yards which was hit straight at Olympic keeper Clint Bolton.

At the other end, Goutzioulis, on for the last half hour for the quiet Mass Sarr, set up two good chances for Greg Owens. First he nodded down a header, which Owens took delightfully and stroked towards the far corner, but Acevski made a brilliant lunge to his right.

Then, on 80 minutes, Goutzioulis cut the ball back from the left for Owens, but Olympic's top-scorer this year somehow shot wide.

With the Knights desperate to see out time, they resorted to fouling Olympic, with Goutzioulis' winner coming from one such foul.

It was a bitter blow for this young Knights squad, made up mostly of Victorian premier league recruits and a couple of shrewd purchases from interstate and overseas.

But Vanis, under fire only a fortnight ago, deserves credit for moulding a tenacious and competitive outfit on such a shoestring budget.

On the evidence of this performance, they will take a lot of beating, and with the likes of Ognenovski — playing his first NSL season after being snapped up from state-league Preston — the Knights' on-field future looks bright.

The lanky defender showed terrific balance and timing in his tackles, shutting out Olympic's man of the moment, Nick Carle.

For Culina, he was delighted with the maximum points and the patience his side showed, but mindful of the long campaign ahead.

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

SYDNEY UNITED 1
BRISBANE STRIKERS 1

Sydney United drew 1-1 with the Brisbane Strikers in a match that will be remembered more for the refereeing decision that had a major bearing on the end result.

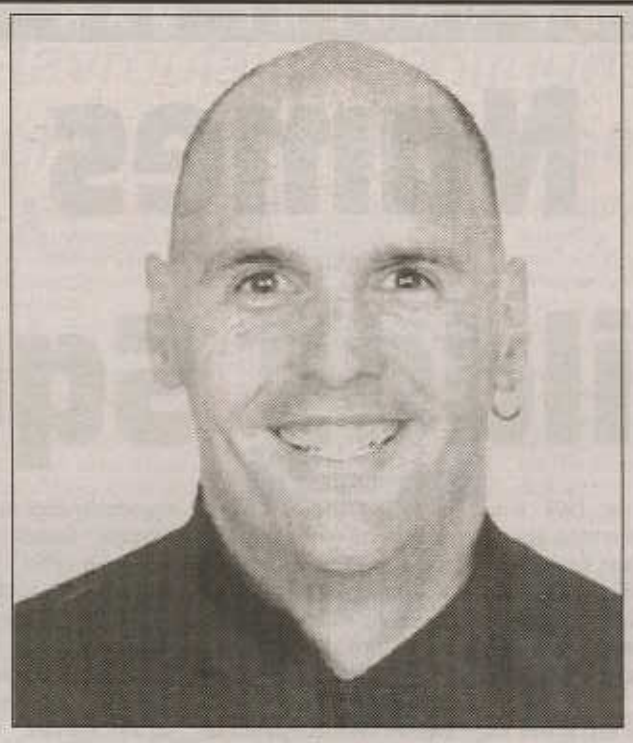
In the 69th minute, New Zealand referee Neil Fox overruled the assistant referee's flag that had waved goal scorer Paul Foster off side. Foster was clearly metres off side when Nick Meredith unleashed a magnificent shot that Brett Hughes could only parry. The ball then projected into the path of Foster who tapped the ball over Hughes who was still on the ground attempting to recover from the original shot.

The referee further raised the ire of the Sydney United faithful late in the match with some perplexing decisions that diminished the spectacle. When the match was allowed to flow, it proved to be an entertaining affair, despite the steamy conditions.

Fielding a depleted line up due to injuries, United had four players start the match that had not started a match all season. Ante Deur, Ray Younis and Shane Webb had not played any football all season in first grade, while Tom Maric had only made one substitution appearance, last week after returning from injury.

Tom Pondeljak was rushed back into squad and came on as a substitute after returning from his honeymoon on Saturday night.

United's lone goal was scored by midfielder Ante Deur. A long throw by Tom Maric skewed off Deur's back and past the outstretched arms of Brisbane goalkeeper Daniel Duke.



Brett Hughes: Man of the Match.

In the first half, Ray Younis, who partnered Awaritefe as a striker, came close to scoring when his powerful header from an inswinging corner just flew over the crossbar. Similarly Francis Awaritefe got behind the Brisbane defence and with two players on his back attempted to chip the keeper but the ball cleared the crossbar.

Despite a wealth of possession and territorial advantage in the first half, United were unable to penetrate and on the break Brisbane came extremely close to scoring when a Foster volley from close range was smothered by United's man of the match, goalkeeper Brett Hughes.

In the second half a long range swinging shot by Kain Rastall flew just wide of the post, while every time Hughes was called into action (in increasing frequency in the second half), he was able to stop the Brisbane projectiles.

After the match, both coaches diplomatically stated that the draw was a satisfactory result when weighing up the amount of chances both teams had had.

With this result United have slipped back to seventh spot on goal difference being equal on points with the fifth placed

Northern Spirit. This is the first time that United have been placed outside the top six all season.

Sydney United will have Richard Plesa and Zlatko Arambasic return to the squad for this Friday's derby against arch rivals Parramatta Power.

Plesa missed the Brisbane match due to suspension, while Zlatko Arambasic will wait until Thursday for a late fitness test after tearing his hamstring in Round 4.

SOUTH MELBOURNE 1
PARRAMATTA POWER 1

By Bert van Bedaf

It was tough going for South Melbourne for 95 minutes and a disappointing outcome for Parramatta Power as the teams drew 1-1 at Bob Jane Stadium last Sunday.

South drew level with a last-gasp header in time-added on after attacking relentlessly for most of the match, while Parramatta defended with every man at the pumps to earn a point after two losses.

South coach Mike Petersen pulled out all stops, substituting Steve Panopoulos with defender Steve Iosifidis (back after knee injury) and pusahing young Patrick Kisnorbo into midfield. He brought on Perth signing Vas Kalogeracos for Andy Vlahos and sent John Anastasiadis to the front line for the tiring Vaughan Coveny.

The veteran warrior's first header in the 85th minute was pushed wide by Power 'keeper Andrew Crews. He headed on to the crossbar two minutes later, but headed home the equaliser in the fifth minute of time-added on, with 10 seconds left on the clock.

Anastasiadis crossed himself and kissed the Bob Jane grass as team mates ran in to congratulate him.

"It's really disappointing for the players. We wanted to come here and eke out a result and we were 10 seconds away from doing it," coach David Mitchell said.

"It was a hard day at the office. From our point of view, the boys were magnificent. They ran it out to the last second. We had a lot of possession and a number of chances. We got something out of this, but more than just a point, we got the bonding and the team spirit," Petersen said.

Having watched South win twice in a row at Albert Park lake, the hometown fans were looking towards a third victory. But Power quickly put South on the back-foot, from which it almost didn't recover, despite creating three clear-cut chances in the second half as well as having a goal disallowed for offside.

Parramatta silenced the South supporters with its opening goal after 13 minutes. Former South defender Nick Orlic headed on Ahmad Erlich's corner, putting Hamilton Thorp in range. But South 'keeper Michael Petkovic blocked Thorp's shot. The ball bounced outside the area, where Alex Tobin was on the spot to blast it into the net.

South took up the challenge with customary attacking flair, creating chances in the 19th and 20th minutes. Captain Paul Trimboli was on target, but had his shot blocked. Andy Vlahos and Zeljko Susa combined and fired on goal, but Orlic cleared.

The Power got within centimetres of scoring again, when Thorp took a free-kick outside the area in the 26th minute. His low shot went through the South wall and hit the base of the far post before it was cleared.

Con Boutsianis nearly equalised with a 35-metre free-kick three minutes from half time. But Crews pushed it wide for a corner, helping his team to a handy lead at the interval.

Trimboli pushed South into the attack immediately after the break, but Crews got the better of Trimboli's hooked shot and punched it wide. Steve Panopoulos tried from long range without troubling Crews and Vlahos got in a shot on the turn that went across the face of goal. Vaughan Coveny failed to connect with a Mehmet Durakovic corner and Panopoulos ran into the Power defence with another attempt.

Paul Trimboli: In everything.

But South kept coming. Boutsianis accepted a fine cross from Zeljko Susa on the left. Unmarked, Boutsianis had time to line up his left foot shot, but he aimed wide of the far post 10 minutes from normal time.

Susa and Boutsianis combined to put Anastasiadis in range, but Crews did well to save Anastasiadis' header from close range.

Another Susa cross reached Anastasiadis with three minutes remaining, but South's hitman struck the crossbar with a diving header. Boutsianis back-heeled a Kalogeracos shot into the net, but the flag had been raised and referee Mathew Breeze ruled offside.

Finally, with 10 seconds left of five minutes of time added on, Anastasiadis headed home the equaliser. It was disappointing for Power, who'd been defending their slender lead with desperation. But all things considered, it was a point South deserved for their non-stop attacking style.

ABSW Player of the Year Points

ROUND SEVEN

NORTHERN SPIRIT V PERTH GLORY
3 - G. Arnold (NS)
2 - S. Miller (PG)
1 - T. Granney (NS)

AUCKLAND V CARLTON
3 - D. Anastasiadis (C)
2 - C. Marsh (AK)
1 - A. Marth (C)

EASTERN PRIDE V MARCONI STALLIONS
3 - P. Wearne (EP)
2 - C. Care (MS)
1 - M. Gotis (EP)

SYDNEY UNITED V BRISBANE STRIKERS
3 - B. Hughes (SU)
2 - P. Foster (BS)
1 - A. Deur (SU)

ADELAIDE CITY V NEWCASTLE
3 - C. Veart (AC)
2 - I. Karlovic (AC)
1 - B. Catlin (NU)

WOLLONGONG V CANBERRA
3 - J. Angelucci (CC)
2 - A. Castro (CC)
1 - S. Petrovski (WW)

SOUTH MELB V PARRAMATTA
3 - P. Trimboli (SM)
2 - A. Crews (PP)
1 - A. Elrich (PP)

OLYMPIC V KNIGHTS
3 - S. Ognenovski (MK)
2 - T. Halpin
1 - S. Sinozic (SO)

PROGRESSIVE POINTS AFTER ROUND SEVEN

Z. Susa	(South Melbourne)	9
D. Cervinski	(Wollongong Wolves)	9
N. Carle	(Sydney Olympic)	8
A. Thompson	(Carlton)	8
P. Trimboli	(South Melbourne)	8
J. Angelucci	(Canberra Cosmos)	8
G. Arnold	(Northern Spirit)	7
B. Burgess	(Northern Spirit)	6
A. Costanzo	(Marconi Stallions)	6
J. Griffiths	(Parramatta Power)	6
G. Lagati	(Adelaide City)	6
L. Lapsansky	(Carlton)	6
A. Vargas	(Melbourne Knights)	6
A. Elrich	(Parramatta Power)	6

SOCCER WOMAN

BY JANENE MAR

Santrac Names Interim Matildas Squad

Interim National Coach Adrian Santrac last Friday announced a 24-member Interim Matildas Squad in preparation for the Australia Cup scheduled for January.

With the already shortened WNSL season still in swing, Santrac has opted to make preliminary selections at this stage to enable his players to be given a specific conditioning program and take full advantage of an additional three weeks fitness work.

The final Australian Team of 18 players for the Australia Cup three-test series against France will be named on 18 December, two days after the WNSL grandfinal in Brisbane.

Santrac's Squad certainly has a new look about it, in this his first selection assignment with Women's Soccer Australia. Twelve of the Olympic Team have been included in this Interim Squad, and are joined by six players who have the opportunity of making their very first Matildas selection. The remaining six either narrowly missed the cut for the Olympics or are former Australian representatives.

"This Squad has been selected mindful of the quality of opposition we have in facing France," said Santrac. "The Squad in effect is a very mobile one which will be the emphasis of my game plan - mobility and quick attacking action, which is hopefully reflected in the quality of players selected. There is plenty of movement, strong defensive flare, plus the capability to attack with flare and penetration. The changes have been made moreso to fit my intended playing style rather than anything else."

Position	Age	State	Hometown	Caps
Dianne ALAGICH D	21	SA	Adelaide	24
Traci BARTLETT D	28	QLD	Sydney	45
Louisa BISBY D	21	VIC	Melbourne	-
Sharon BLACK M	29	Oseas/SA	Adelaide	52
Joanne BUTLAND GK	22	ACT	Cairns	4
Michelle CARNEY F	18	NSW	Sydney	-
Sarah COOPER M	31	Oseas/ACT	Darwin	52
Bryony DUUS M	23	QLD	Brisbane	28
Alicia FERGUSON F	19	QLD	Brisbane	31
Alison FORMAN M	31	Oseas/NNSW	Newcastle	68
Kelly GOLEBIOWSKI F	19	NSW	Sydney	34
Cassandra KELL GK	20	NSW	Gosford	-
Jamara MAZA M	19	QLD	Brisbane	-
Justine McLAUGHLIN F	16	NSW	Sydney	-
Kate McSHEA D	17	QLD	Brisbane	12
Julie MURRAY F	30	Oseas/NSW	Canberra	67
Claire NICHOLS GK	25	QLD	Brisbane	10
Kim REVELL M	25	QLD	Brisbane	28
Taryn ROCKALL M	23	NSW	Sydney	-
Cheryl SALISBURY D	26	NNSW	Newcastle	68
Anissa TANN-DARBY D	33	NSW	Sydney	88
Amy TAYLOR D	21	ACT	Canberra	19
Leanne TRIMBOLI GK	25	SA	Adelaide	3
Sacha WAINWRIGHT D	28	ACT	Canberra	32

Of the new players, Louisa Bisby has come closest to making her international debut, having sat on the bench in the 1997 Ram Sports Cup test series against the USA. Taryn Rockall was a member of the 1997 and 1998 National Train-On Squads, whilst Cassandra Kell was named in the 1998 Train-On.

Bisby has also played for Australian Youth Teams (U19 1998, U21 1999), as have Rockall (U21 1997), Kell (U19 1998, U21 1999), Michelle Carney (U21 1999) and Justine McLaughlin (U17 2000). Ex-Victorian Jamara Maza is the only player here not to have previously worn the green and gold at any level.

Several players may well be making a comeback after some time. Goalkeeper Claire Nichols was first selected for Australia as far back as 1989, but played all her full internationals during the 1994-95 period, and was a member of the 1995 World Cup Team although didn't play in this event. Traci Bartlett and Kim Revell both walked away from the Australian Team and an opportunity of playing at the Olympic Games back in December 1999. Joanne Butland and Amy Taylor were both 'alternates' on standby for the Olympic Team, whilst Sarah Cooper was also in the Squad right up until this time.

On the flip side, a total of six Olympians have therefore missed out on making this preliminary Squad, only one of whom (goalkeeper Tracey Wheeler) has retired from representative football.

This year's WNSL is being muted as being below its normal standard. So does Australia really have the depth to be introducing so many new players at once, should it come to that.

This being the start of a new World Cup/Olympic phase, there is more time to be making some changes. And of course every coach has different ideas.

Santrac also says the naming of these 24 players does not close the door on anyone else making the team. "This doesn't exclude anyone," he said.

"There may be someone who has escaped the net. I will continue to go through the videos of national league that I've got. Perhaps there's someone I haven't yet seen, who will perform to a level to bring them into consideration."

With one round remaining before the semi and grandfinal, it seems several hopefuls will have just one more chance this weekend to stake that claim. Likewise with the cuts to be made to finalise the actual team of 18, certain players will have less opportunities to be seen than others.

Adrian Santrac: New Matildas coach.

Also in the equation are the players currently overseas. Julie Murray and Sarah Cooper are playing as members of the World All-Stars team in the promotional indoor tour across America. Alison Forman and Sharon Black are playing professionally in Denmark for club Fortuna Hjorring.

"I've contacted all the overseas players by email and they are all very keen to play in the Australia Cup," said Santrac. "I've seen most of them on tape, and done a lot of research into their backgrounds and gathered much information on them, enough to indicate their selection."

The Australia Cup will be held in Queensland and Northern NSW 10-17 January, with the Matildas in camp from 2 January.

TOP GOALSCORERS

5	Taryn ROCKALL NSW Sapphires
4	Jessica HALFPENNY Adelaide Sensation
3	Jamara MAZA Queensland Sting
3	Kim REVELL Queensland Sting
3	Tara McMINN Northern NSW Pride

TOO HARD TO PICK

Queensland Sting have already secured first place with this weekend's fifth and final round remaining, and they will therefore host the grandfinal on 16 December.

But apart from that, little else is known about the finals series — who will make the cut, and who will host the semifinal, the playoff between second and third to decide the other grandfinalist.

PROGRESSIVE POINTS LADDER

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
QUEENSLAND STING	4	4	-	-	10	1	9	12
NSW SAPPHIRES	4	2	1	1	10	7	3	7
ADELAIDE SENSATION	4	2	-	2	4	3	1	6
NORTHERN NSW PRIDE	4	2	-	2	7	9	-2	6
VICTORIA VISION	4	1	1	2	4	7	-3	4
CANBERRA ECLIPSE	4	-	-	4	2	10	-8	0

The configurations are many. Canberra Eclipse are the only team who cannot make the semi. So this is the crunch weekend for defending champs NSW Sapphires, perennial grandfinalists Adelaide Sensation, and first time hopefuls Northern NSW Pride and Victoria Vision.

Out of the four, only Vision are unable to make second spot and therefore hosting rights for the semi.

The match between the Sapphires and Sensation in Adelaide is sure to be a cracker.

Although not as experienced a team as usual, NSW may well feel the pressure moreso than their opponent. And the South Aussies are renowned for pulling things off when the odds are against them.

Northern NSW Pride have the unenviable task of beating frontrunners Sting if they are to advance to the semi, but football's a funny game. Queensland can't be beaten out of first, but would not be expected to drop their guard in any case.

The Vics will be confident of playing their part to stay alive when they take on cellar-dwellers Eclipse at home. But the Canberra outfit are certainly not as bad a team as their position suggests and will be fighting to score their first points.

THE BUSINESS END

	ROUND 5	
Sat 2 Dec	Adelaide Sensation v NSW Sapphires ***Hindmarsh Stadium***	3pm
Sat 2 Dec	Victoria Vision v Canberra Eclipse ***Epping Stadium***	3pm
Sun 3 Dec	Northern NSW Pride v Queensland Sting ***Coffs Harbour Stadium***	11am
	SEMI-FINAL	
Sat 9 Dec	2nd Place v 3rd Place tbc	tbc
	GRAND FINAL	
Sat 16 Dec	Queensland Sting v Winner Semifinal tbc	tbc

NSW Premier League

ROUND 4

BLACKTOWN OUT MUSCLE SHARKS

Sutherland Sharks	0
Blacktown City	3

By Don O'Regan

A superlative performance from Latvian international Vadim Mikoutski capped by two fine goals, was eventually enough to give Blacktown City Demons an entertaining 3-0 victory over the Sutherland Sharks last Saturday evening at Seymour Shaw Park.

It was a long time coming for the reigning Premiers however, with the three City goals registering in the final nine minutes and only after Sutherland had missed two great second-half opportunities to take the lead.

Grand Bard's header in the 49th minute fell to Peter Pullicino on the edge of the area and his dipping shot was tipped over the bar by the alert John Crawley in the Demons' goal.

The Sharks' second chance came in the 66th minute and it really should have given them the lead but Bard's header from only three metres out and with the goal at his mercy, flew inexplicably wide.

Sutherland had earlier wasted another effort in the 41st minute when Colin McAusland saw his attempt cleared off the line by City full-back Ben Willard and you cannot afford to let the team that is going for its fourth consecutive Championship off the hook so easily.

With Mikoutski spraying inch-perfect 40 yard passes around the park with consummate ease, the Demons always looked as though they might snare the three points although it took a piece of tactical genius from City coach Brian Brown to engineer the result. Replacing his injured defender, Mark Racker, with forward Zlatko Donev and switching Mikoutski into the midfield and pulling the long serving Damon Langan back to sweeper gave the Demons and the impetus they needed to sail home with a wet sail.

In the 81st minute, Robert Angievski's right-sided corner flew dangerously into the Sutherland area where Donev flung himself fearlessly at the ball to head it over the line for the long awaited opening goal.

Only two minutes later and Blacktown had doubled their lead when Donev's long through ball caused consternation in the Sutherland rearguard and, with Mikoutski bearing down on them, the last two men at the back, Daniel Farias in goal and central defender Alen Stajcic, conspired between themselves to put each other off and as the ball bounced wickedly on the sub-standard Seymour Shaw surface, Mikoutski was on hand to knock the loose ball into the empty net for the easiest of strikes.

Mikoutski's second goal though was much classier with Damien Brown's defence splitting pass, after having the ball gifted to him by a stray Sharks' clearance and striding down the wing, finding him in space and, as he powered into the left side of the goal area, he drove the ball into the right side of the goal.

With maximum points from their first four games, Blacktown are already looking like the team to beat if any of the other contenders are going to try for the title and prevent them from taking a fourth consecutive Premiership back to Sydney's west.

Belconnen put paid to hangover fear with convincing victory

Belconnen	3
St George	1

By Graham Cooke

Belconnen Blue Devils turned in their best performance yet in the NSW Premier League to beat St George Saints 3-1 on Saturday — and although coach Lino Fiorese maintains there is still room for improvement, the team is showing clear signs of settling into a formidable combination.

Any fears of a hangover after the 2-1 loss to Blacktown City last week were dispelled as the Devils went on a first-half rampage, striker Steve Lazzari underlining his challenge to be the competition's first golden boot with two goals, bringing his season's total to six.

He opened the scoring after 12 minutes, a celebration of the reunion with his striking partner at Gungahlin Juventus during the winter, George Cattanach, who set him up with the perfect pass in front of goal.

With the St George defence hanging off him, Lazzari had time to crack the ball low and hard past goalkeeper Stacy Alogdellis.

The visitors were back in the game in the 33rd minute. This time it was the Belconnen defence who were at fault as they failed to challenge at a corner, allowing Angelo Petratos to slip the ball home from close range.

Belconnen regained the initiative nine minutes later. Sent away by Josh Whittington, Lazzari took on the Saints' defence, cracking the ball into a narrow gap between defender Michael Kladis and Alogdellis, to score.

In first half stoppage time, Lazzari played the provider to set up Cattanach who scored with a well judged shot from an acute angle.

The second half was scoreless, largely due to the efforts of Belconnen goalkeeper Anthony Giannasca who thwarted a St George revival with a string of outstanding saves and, at the other end, the crossbar which took the weight of a full-blooded drive that had seemed destined to present Lazzari with his hat-trick.

Fiorese said he was disappointed that after starting well his team had let St George back into the game. "Then in the second half we let them get in behind us and we were lucky Tony Giannasca was in such good form," he said.

"Apart from that, I was happy with individual players including Oscar Zamora and Josh Whittington who I thought had their best games of the season."

The crowd was 608.

• RESULTS •

Canterbury Marrickville 1 (Nikas 46m) **Penrith Panthers 0**

Leichhardt 1 (Karavatakis 51m) **Bonnyrigg 3** (Reid 32m, Luff 48m & 78m)

Belconnen 3 (Lazzari 12m & 42m, Cattanach 45m) **St George 1** (Petratos 33m)

Sutherland 0 Blacktown City 3 (Donev 82m, V Mikoutski 83m & 90m)

Parramatta Eagles 1 (Conde 90m) **Central Coast 0**

• TOP SCORERS •

AFTER ROUND 4

Player	Club	Goals
Darren Iocca	Blacktown	6
Steve Lazzari	Belconnen	6
George Cattanach	Belconnen	2
Robbie Gomez	Bonnyrigg	2
Michael Hawrysiuk	Bonnyrigg	2
Colin Luff	Bonnyrigg	2
David Reid	Bonnyrigg	2
Vadim Mikoutski	Blacktown	2

NSW PREMIER LEAGUE LADDER

(AFTER ROUND 4)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blacktown City	4	4	0	0	10	2	12
Belconnen	4	3	0	1	10	4	9
Bonnyrigg	3	2	0	1	9	4	6
C'bury M'ville	3	2	0	1	3	2	6
Parramatta	3	1	1	1	3	5	4
St George	2	1	0	1	3	4	3
Central Coast	4	1	0	3	3	5	3
Leichhardt	3	1	0	2	3	5	3
Sutherland	3	0	1	2	1	6	1
Penrith	3	0	0	3	2	10	0

NSW Premier League

www.nswpremierleague.com

FRIDAY 1 DECEMBER

Under 19s: 6.00pm — Canterbury M'ville v Leichhardt
First Grade: 8.00pm — HENSON PARK
St George v Sutherland — ST GEORGE STADIUM

SATURDAY 2 DECEMBER

Under 19s: 4.30pm — Central Coast v Belconnen
First Grade: 6.30pm — NORTH POWER STADIUM
Under 19s: 5.00pm — Bonnyrigg v Parramatta
First Grade: 7.00pm — SERBIAN CENTRE
Penrith v Blacktown City — ANDREWS ROAD FIELD

Rescheduled Fixtures from Round 3 Washouts (Under 19 and First-Grade)

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Gabriel "Chi Chi" Mendez

(Northern Spirit)

AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH
SOCCER
WEEKLY

National Youth League 2000/2001

NORTHERN DIVISION (ROUND 6)

FRIDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2000

Wollongong Wolves .....1 — **Canberra Cosmos** ..1
(goalscorer not available) — *(goalscorer not available)*

SATURDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2000

Sydney United .....2 — **QAS** 1
(Jordan 39', Oliver 64') — *(Davidson 66')*

AIS .....3 — **Newcastle United** ...1
(McKay 53', 80', Richter 69') — *(Flemming 58')*

SUNDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2000

Sydney Olympic .....3 — Syd. Olympic Aca. ...2
(Parisi 60', Biviano 62', own goal 81') — (El-Jamal 80', Amegashie 88')

ACT Academy .....0 — **Northern Spirit** 3
(Kethel 5', R. Griffiths 62', Robson 78')

Marconi Stallions Colts .....2 — **Parramatta Power** ..3
(Tome 14', Brosque 59') — *(Roodenberg 37', J. Griffiths 66', 78')*

Newcastle United Colts .....0 — **Marconi Stallions** ...1
(De Roit 44')

Bye – NSWIS

Round 25 Match Brought Forward –
played Sunday 26 November 2000

NSWIS .....0 — **QAS** 0

LEADING SCORERS

Tallin Martin	**AIS**	**6**
Alex Brosque	Marconi Stallions Colts	5
Simon Catanzaro	Northern Spirit	5

	P	W	D	B	L	F	A	Pts
A.I.S.	**8**	**7**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**13**	**7**	**21**
Northern Spirit	7	6	0	0	1	19	5	18
Marconi Stallions	6	4	1	0	1	8	2	13
Parramatta Power	6	4	1	0	1	12	7	13
Sydney United	6	4	0	1	2	12	7	13
Wollongong Wolves	5	3	2	1	0	12	3	11
Marconi Stallions Colts	6	3	0	1	3	16	7	9
N.S.W.I.S.	6	2	2	1	2	5	5	8
Sydney Olympic	5	2	1	1	2	10	9	7
Q.A.S.	9	2	1	0	6	15	25	7
Canberra Cosmos	6	1	2	1	3	10	12	5
Newcastle United	6	1	1	0	4	4	7	4
Newcastle United Colts	4	1	0	1	3	1	10	3
ACT Academy	7	1	0	0	6	3	23	3
Sydney Olympic Academy	7	0	1	0	6	7	17	1

SOUTHERN DIVISION (ROUND 5)

FRIDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2000

Melbourne Knights Acad .....1 (Sertan Doganay) — **Melbourne Knights** ...3 (Josip Loncaric 2, Jasmin Sehic)

SATURDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2000

Eastern Pride .....8 (Juan Nilo 3, Ben Cassar 3, Adam Griffiths, Denis Mustac) — **Fawkner Blues** .....1 (Brett Cunningham)

VIS .....0 — **Carlton Institute** .....4 (Frank Lagana, Isayin Erdogan, Steve Martin, Daniel Debevc)

SUNDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2000

Green Gully .....1 (Darko Jakovljevic) — **Sth Melb. Eagles Ac** ...3 (Alfie El Dib 2, Michael Vonja)

Albury Wodonga .....1 (Elliot Jones) — **South Dandenong** .....1 (Veton Korcarevski)

MONDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2000

South Melbourne vBulleen Zebras
(Bob Jane Stadium, 7 pm)

Carlton Peninsula Blues v Bye
Preston Lions v Bye

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Eastern Pride	**5**	**4**	**0**	**1**	**17**	**5**	**12**
Melbourne Knights	5	4	0	1	16	7	12
VIS	5	4	0	1	14	7	12
South Melbourne Institute	3	3	0	0	14	6	9
South Dandenong	5	2	2	1	9	6	8
Carlton Peninsula Blues	4	2	0	2	14	5	6
Carlton	4	2	0	2	11	5	6
South Melbourne Eagles Ac	4	2	0	2	7	10	6
Melbourne Knights Academy	5	2	0	3	7	12	6
Green Gully Cavaliers	5	1	1	3	4	7	4
Albury Wodonga	5	1	1	3	5	11	4
Bulleen Zebras	5	1	0	4	5	14	3
Fawkner Blues	4	1	0	3	6	19	3
Preston Lions	3	0	0	3	1	16	0

SOUTHERN DIVISION FIXTURES

WEDNESDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2000

South Dandenong v Preston Lions,
George Andrews Reserve, 7 pm

ROUND 6

FRIDAY 1 DECEMBER 2000

Melbourne Knights v Eastern Pride,
Knights Stadium, 7.30 pm
Carlton Peninsula Blues v South Melbourne,
Lawton Reserve, 6.30 pm

SATURDAY 2 DECEMBER 2000

South Melbourne Eagles Academy v Albury Wodonga,
Keilor Park Reserve, 5 pm
Preston Lions v Melbourne Knights Academy,
B T Connor Reserve, 4 pm

SUNDAY 3 DECEMBER 2000

Carlton Institute v Green Gully,
TBA, 4 pm
Fawkner Blues v VIS,
Reggio Calabria Club, 4 pm

Bye v Bulleen Zebras
Bye v South Dandenong

By Roy Hay

Melbourne Knights Youth beat its Academy side by 3-1 in a very even and competitive game. First team coach Vlado Vanis allocated three senior players to each side to maintain the balance, and after Josip Loncaric opened the scoring for the Youth in the first minute, Serkan Doganay very quickly equalised. Jasmin Sehic put the Youth ahead again in 15 minutes, and just after the interval Loncaric got his second goal. The midfield battle was the highlight as both sides tried to establish supremacy.

Carlton bounced back to beat the VIS by 4-0. Carlton coach Phil Stubbins, reports, "This was a very impressive result for the club. The side played with real heart and commitment against the V.I.S. today. Every player performed somewhere near his best and as a group everyone was in it together." Stubbins played four 15 year olds, including John Tran and Frank Lagana who both started. "Peter Koutsoupias played his first game for the club coming on in the 60th minute and became a real handfull for the VIS's backline, unlucky not to score on a couple of occasions. John Petridis also came on and did exceptionally well as stopper. New signing Brett Manzella played in goal having just turned 16. He is one to look out for, getting over a shaky start and saving a penalty on his debut. To be fair to Ernie Merrick's boys they were missing a couple of key players, who I'm sure may have made a difference. The VIS look to have some very competent young players and I'm sure Ernie's team will provide some real stars of the future. In particular, I was impressed with both Spase Dilevski at sweeper and Brendan Beni in the midfield. However, I thought on the day Carlton played some excellent football and I was proud of the way they bounced back and performed considering last week's bad loss to Eastern Pride."

Eastern Pride demolished Fawkner Blues by 8-1. Hat-tricks to Juan Nilo and Ben Cassar and singles to Denis Mustac, keeping up his goal a game run, and Adam Griffiths produced the eight for the Pride. Brett Cunningham kept up his fine goalscoring touch with the goal for the Blues.

Green Gully led South Melbourne Eagles Academy by a goal to nil from the 21st minute when Darko Jakovljevic scored for the home team, but a late flurry by the Eagles saw them get up by three goals to one.

Alfie El Dib scored on the hour then added his second and the Eagles third in 88 minutes. Michael Vonja chipped in with a goal in 84 minutes.

South Dandenong made the long run to Albury Wodonga and opened with a goal by Veton Korcarevski after 13 minutes. In very hot conditions both sides sought relief and water breaks, but the Warriors showed enough fortitude to grab an equaliser through Elliot Jones in 64 minutes. The Warriors had a one-on-one with the keeper but when that was not converted both sides had to settle for the draw.

South Melbourne plays Bulleen Zebras on Monday night at 7 pm at Bob Jane Stadium, while the byes this week involved Carlton Peninsula Blues and Preston Lions.

LEADING SCORERS

Denis Mustac	**Eastern Pride**	**6**
Josip Loncaric	Melbourne Knights	6
Daniel Debevc	Carlton	5
Nick Waite	Carlton Peninsula Blues	5
Juan Nilo	Eastern Pride	5
Victor Memeti	South Dandenong	5
Carlo Malina	Carlton Peninsula Blues	4
Brett Cunningham	Fawkner Blues	4
Ben Cassar	Eastern Pride	3
Ben Cogger	Melbourne Knights	3
Vince Zafferano	South Melbourne Eagles Ac	3
Brendan Beni	VIS	3

STARS IN THE MAKING

ABSW's Mark Stavroulakis continues his weekly look at Junior Soccer in Australia.

Louis Brain

AT A GLANCE

Full Name:	Louis Carl Brain
Club:	Adelaide City
DOB:	9/5/82
Left/Right:	Both
Eye Colour:	Blue
Hair Colour:	Blond
Height:	174cm
Weight:	67kg
Positions Played:	Midfield - Striker

THE STATS & FACTS

Clubs Played At:
U13 — U14 Modbury Jets
Spent 4 years at SASI
Signed professional contract with Adelaide City in '97

Age Started Playing Soccer: 8

THE LOOK FORWARD

Career Highlight To Date: Scoring the only goal against Bahrain in the World Cup qualifiers that sent the team to the World Cup and playing in the U17 World Cup final against Brazil.

Ambition: To play in Europe

Words Of Advice: 'Never lose site of your goals and work hard towards them'

Best Advice Received: 'Always work hard no matter what, hard work gets you where you want be' *(Dad, David)*

PERSONALITY INSIGHT

Favourite Actor: Wesley Snipes
Favourite Actress: Meg Ryan

Top 5 Movies:
-Boyz in the Hood
-Friday
-Nutty Professor
-Dirty Dancing
-Blue Streak

Favourite Comedian: Chubby Brown

If you could be a character from any movie who would you be? Steven Baldwin in Sliver.

Best ever concert: Adelaide City Bad Shirt Night

5 Cd's You Couldn't Do Without?
-Craig David - Born Again
-Wild 11
-Wild 10
-Wild 8
-Mase — Harlem World

Favourite TV show: Jerry Springer
Favourite Cartoon Character: Bart Simpson

Dinner Party For 6, Who Would You Invite?
Pamela Anderson
Elle McPherson
Cindy Crawford
Paul Gascoigne
Girlfriend (Angel)
Superman

Entrée: Antipasto
Main Course: Chicken Parmesana
Dessert: Chocolate Mudcake

THE PEERS

Favourite Overseas Player: Paul Gascoigne
Favourite Overseas Team: Liverpool
Most Admired Australian Player (Local Based): Claudio Pelosi
Most Admired Australian Player (Overseas Based): Harry Kewell
Most Admired Defender: Sol Campbell
Most Admired Midfielder: Paul Gascoigne
Most Admired Striker: Dylan MacAlister
Most Admired Goalkeeper: Jason Petkovic
Hardest Opponent (Played): Carl Veart

Adelaide City's young gun Louis Brain has been around for quite some time now.

The 18-year-old midfielder cum striker has already spent three seasons in the National League, a phenomenal achievement for any young player.

Brain started off his soccer career at the South Australian Institute of Sport. It was at this Institute where Louis developed the mentality of becoming professional. "I spent four years at SASI where they developed me really well. The good thing about the Institute is that there are coaches that help you individually on your game. They also work on your physical and mental strength," said the Adelaide City youngster.

It was representing the South Australian State team in National Titles that gave Brain the head start he wanted in putting himself in contention for the U17 Joeys side. "I took part in the U14 and U15 South Australian squads in Brisbane and Sydney. My first Nationals were special as we finished second and overall it was one of the best performances a South Australian side has ever done. It was at these tournaments I was seen by many scouts and managers. From the last Nationals, I made an impression and was selected to trial for the U17 Joeys side. We trained hard, had many camps then the squad was picked for the Oceania Qualifiers in Fiji where I scored six goals. I was ecstatic about being selected for the Joeys," said Brain.

It was Louis' only goal in Bahrain that sent the Australian

Louis Brain

U17 side to the World Cup in New Zealand. "It was the most memorable goal I have ever scored. I was happy to help my teammates out and scoring that goal will always be in my memory for a long time. The World Cup was awesome, we proved many people wrong and really put Australia on the map. It was unfortunate that we lost in the final on penalties, but getting there was just amazing," said Louis.

Playing abroad has been a dream for young Louie, but this dream has been realised before, trailing in Italy and England. "At the age of 16, I had a two month trial in England for West Ham. That was unbelievable, training with the reserve side at that time was a huge experience for me. I will never forget the day I trained alongside Ian Wright and John Hartson. Also after the World Cup, I trailed in Italy for Serie B side Verona. It was a three-week trial where I trained with the first grade. It was unreal playing alongside quality players, it was very technical and tactical, overall two big experiences I will never forget," said the lucky youngster.

Adelaide City was a club that kept a close eye on young Louis, and it was three years ago where Brain was signed by the Zebras. "I was playing in the Adelaide Premier League for Parra Hills and had signed with them for two weeks. It was a night competition and whilst I was there, I played very well and Adelaide City offered me a three year contract," said the former Salisbury East High School student.

Brain didn't take long to debut, and it was a fairytale start to his soccer career, with a memorable first match the youngster will never forget. "I played my first match against Brisbane Strikers which we won 3-0. I wasn't as nervous as I thought I'd be, but scoring a goal in my first match was great," said Brain.

'Mozza' as he is known to by his teammates has had a great start to the season this year already getting on the score sheet. "I think I am enjoying my soccer more than previous years as playing a free role is great. Team morale is also up there and hopefully this carries on until the end of the season," said the former Joey.

The young star has this year extended his contract with Adelaide City for three years and hopes that he plays as many games as possible and scores at least 10 goals. "I really want to have a good year this year, and hopefully with some good results, we can prove our critics wrong this year and show to that we mean business. We have a young squad but that only makes the team play much stronger and better," said the hopeful Young Socceroo.

Paul Kohler

AT A GLANCE

Full Name:	Paul Edward Kohler
Club:	Sydney Olympic
DOB:	5/8/79
Left/Right:	Right
Eye Colour:	Blue
Hair Colour:	Brown
Height:	5ft10
Weight:	79kg
Positions Played:	Midfield

THE STATS & FACTS

Clubs Played At:
U13 — Sutherland Shire
U14 — 1st Grade — Sydney Olympic
Signed 1st grade contract in '98

Age Started Playing Soccer: 5

THE LOOK FORWARD

Career Highlight To Date: Playing my debut against Perth Glory last year and being selected in the '97 Australian Schoolboys side that toured South America.

Ambition: To play overseas

Words Of Advice: 'Have fun and train hard'

Best Advice Received: 'You've got the potential so use it' *(Wal, Dad)*

PERSONALITY INSIGHT

Favourite Actor: Adam Sandler
Favourite Actress: Drew Barrymore

Top 5 Movies:
-Happy Gilmore
-Waterboy
-Boogie Nights
-Idiot Box
-Human Traffic

Favourite Comedian: Eddie Murphy

If you could be a character from any movie who would you be? Mel Gibson in Braveheart.

Best ever concert: Big Day Out

5 Cd's You Couldn't Do Without?
-MTV Ibiza 2000
-Trance Nation 4
-Bexta - Mixology
-Blink 182
-Unwritten law

Favourite TV show: Seinfeld
Favourite Cartoon Character: Homer Simpson

Dinner Party For 6, Who Would You Invite?
-Dad
-2 Mates
-Girlfriend
-Gaizka Mendieta
-Denise Richards

Entrée: Pasta
Main Course: Big Lobster
Dessert: Cheesecake

THE PEERS

Favourite Overseas Player: Gaizka Mendieta
Favourite Overseas Team: Liverpool
Most Admired Australian Player (Local Based): Pablo Cardozo
Most Admired Australian Player (Overseas Based): Harry Kewell
Most Admired Defender: Ante Juric
Most Admired Midfielder: Gaizka Mendieta
Most Admired Striker: Gabriel Batistuta
Most Admired Goalkeeper: Mark Bosnich
Hardest Opponent (Played): Ivan Ergic

Sydney Olympic has always been one of the most under rated teams in the National League. With seven rounds gone, Olympic are top of the table. One of the young guns currently in the squad, Paul Kohler hopes this trend will continue until the end of the season.

The 21-year-old defender cum midfielder has been one of the many influential players in the squad this year.

A former Sutherland Shire lad, Kohler has spent eight years at Olympic, something of which is a big achievement for any player.

Kohler's career started when he was 14, where he played for the U14's of Olympic.

"My first year at the club was great as I was young and willing to learn. While I was in the youth teams of Olympic I always played well and also got pushed many times to play up a grade. After cracking a reserve grade spot it was from then on I was pushed to the limit by the club. They saw potential in me and I regularly trained with the first team as well," said Paul.

Before making the step up to first grade, Paul spent his fair share playing with the Olympic Youth team. "I was 17 at that time and playing against National League players was a huge buzz. It geared me up for the real thing and I was happy that I played most of the game. It was playing well with the Youth side that got me training with first team at the age of 18 which was a huge highlight at that time," said Kohler.

It only got better for the young star as Kohler was offered his first contract in '98 where he signed with the first team. "It was like being an apprentice, I signed for one year and option of another. I basically trained with them and played reserve grade, until I proved to the coach that I was a National League player," said the former Olympic Junior.

'Pepsi' as he is known by his teammates got his big start in last season's National League campaign. "After training with the team for so long, injuries started to occur in the side. Branko called me up to play my first match

Paul Kohler

against Perth Glory at Belmore Sports Ground. The crowd was awesome as we were going well and had at least 8,000 people watching us. I had the task of marking Con Boutsianis, we ended up one a piece but it was a great debut no doubt," said the up and coming star.

Being apart of so many games after that, even taking part in last year's National League semi finals, Kohler finds himself this year a regular first team player. "It's been great so far as I've played seven from seven and I've been pretty consistent. I think the team itself has blended in well and all the boys are enthusiastic about winning each game," said Paul.

Head coach at Olympic, Branko Culina is one of the many influential coaches that coached Kohler in his career. "Branko is a good technical and fitness coach. He was the person that gave me my first chance in first grade. He also was the one that changed me from being a defender to a midfielder," said Kohler.

"Once I turned full-pro, I thought it was the best thing ever. I had to put my University studies on hold as all I want to do is concentrate on my football," said the former St Patrick's Sutherland student.

Being hailed as one of the youngest squads in the League, Paul believes that the team is doing well with the help of the older players. "I think the introduction of young raw talent, and the already experienced players provides a mean combination. I think with a few more games, the team itself will only get better. We lost players like Mendez and Cardozo this year, but so far we have battled the odds and have done well," said Paul.

Winning the prestigious 'Rookie of the Year Award' last year at the Olympic presentation night, Kohler has high hopes of doing well this year.

"I'm pretty confident that we can contend with being number one, this year provided that we keep away from injuries," said the young defender.

The former Australian Schoolboy was really ecstatic about the side's dramatic winner against Melbourne Knights last Sunday. "It was unbelievable, the dressing room was buzzing. Winning games such as these will only further the team's momentum in staying at the top of the table," said Kohler.

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Deportivo sink PSG to remain unbeaten

PSG	1
Deportivo La Coruna	3

Deportivo Coruna maintained their unbeaten run in the Champions League with a fine 3-1 win away against Paris St Germain in their Group B clash at the Parc des Princes last week.

Deportivo's Turu Flores of heads the ball away from PSG's Jimmy Algerino.

Deportivo's Turu Flores (left) shoots the ball past PSG keeper Lionel Letizi during the Spaniards 3-1 win in France.

A gross goalkeeping blunder by Jose Molina in the 38th minute gave the Parisians false hopes of snatching their first victory in six matches.

But Jimmy Algerino's first half goal was only a reprieve for PSG, who sank after an hour of play.

Moroccan defender Noureddine Naybet equalised with a fine volley in the 63rd minute while Angola's Emerson should have been awarded a penalty in the following move.

It was only a matter of time as Turu Flores made it 2-0 on a counter-attack seven minutes later from just outside the box.

Deportivo, the only team yet to lose a match in the competition, wrapped up the game with a last-minute goal by Dutchman Roy Makaay.

Ugly scenes overshadow Milan-Galatasaray draw

AC Milan	2
Galatasaray	2

A pulsating 2-2 draw between AC Milan and Galatasaray ended amid ugly scenes at the San Siro last week with eight players involved in a fracas and coins and objects being thrown onto the pitch.

C. Milan midfielder Gennaro Gattuso (L) fights for the ball with Galatasaray's midfielder Hasan Sas during their Champions League second phase Group B match at the San Siro Stadium in Milan Novembe 21, 2000.

Swiss referee Urs Meier just about kept control of the situation, but collected a handful of objects aimed at the players just before the final whistle.

The incident appeared to be sparked when AC Milan pressed for a late winner and one of their forwards appeared to follow through on the Galatasaray goalkeeper Kerem Inan.

Galatasaray had built a 2-0 lead only for Milan to level — and have an Oliver Bierhoff goal disallowed for offside.

Galatasaray took the lead in the 39th minute when Ergun Penbe picked out Mario Jardel with a cross from the left and the Brazilian blasted home a left-footed volley.

Two minutes later the Istanbul side doubled their advantage when Hasan Sas sprung the Milan offside trap and ran alone into the area to head Hagi's free-kick over the advancing Milan 'keeper Christian Abbiati.

Milan charged forward and only an excellent save from Kerem foiled a scorching volley from Andriy Shevchenko. Then Paolo Maldini struck the post from close range as Milan.

Valencia use their heads

Valencia	2
Sturm Graz	0

Headed goals either side of halftime gave Valencia a 2-0 victory over Sturm Graz in their opening Champions League second phase Group A match last week.

Valencia's first goal did not come until the final minute of the first half when giant Norwegian striker John Carew met a near-post corner from Mendieta with a powerful header.

Sturm goalkeeper Kazimierz Sidorczuk managed to get a hand to the ball but was unable to stop it crossing the line.

The home side's second came just two minutes after the break, once again from a Mendieta corner. This time it was Valencia's other striker, Juan Sanchez, who dived in front of the Sturm defence to direct a header below Sidorczuk.

Valencia continued to dominate for the rest of the match, with Carew a constant threat to the Austrian defence, but despite peppering the Sturm goal with shots the Spaniards were unable to stretch their lead.

Valencia defender Joachim Bjorklund (right) battles for the ball with Sturm Graz captain Ivica Vastic.

Valencia's Argentine midfielder Kily Gonzalez (right) battles for the ball with Sturm Gaz's striker Markjus Schopp during their match at Valencia's Mestalla Stadium.

Scholes double sinks Greeks

Manchester United	3
Panathinaikos	1

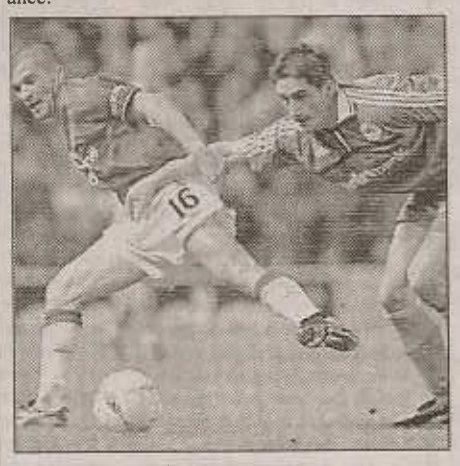
Paul Scholes scored twice in the last 10 minutes to lead Manchester United to a 3-1 victory over Panathinaikos in their opening match in the second phase of the Champions League at Old Trafford last week.

Scholes put United 2-1 ahead in the 80th minute and added the third seconds from time to deny Panathinaikos a richly deserved point from their Group A clash.

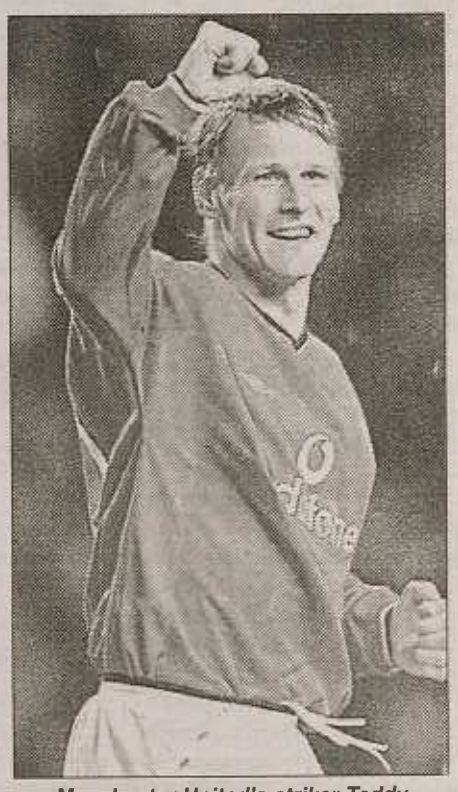
The Greeks appeared to have done enough to earn a draw after a stunning free-kick from Giorgios Karagounis levelled the scores in the 64th minute.

Karagounis swept his curled effort past Fabien Barthez from 30 metres after United had been given a lead early in the second half by Teddy Sheringham.

He drilled home a 48th minute opener after Dwight Yorke had flicked on Barthez's long clearance.



Manchester United's captain Roy Keane (left), takes the ball away from Panathinaikos' Nikolaos Karagounis.



Manchester United's striker Teddy Sheringham celebrates scoring against Panathinaikos at old Trafford, Manchester.

But Scholes ensured victory by being in the perfect place to fire home after Mikael Silvestre's mazy dribble and shot only brought a parried save from Antonis Nikopolidis.

The goal was a major blow for Panathinaikos, who would have been three goals in front by the interval but for Barthez producing excellent saves to deny Nikolaos Liberopoulos twice and Krzysztof Warzycha once.

Scholes wrapped up the points with a chip from the edge of the area just as full-time approached.

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Spartak crush Arsenal

Spartak	4
Arsenal	1

Spartak Moscow crushed Arsenal 4-1 in their first match of the second phase of the Champions League last week despite going down 1-0 after only two minutes.

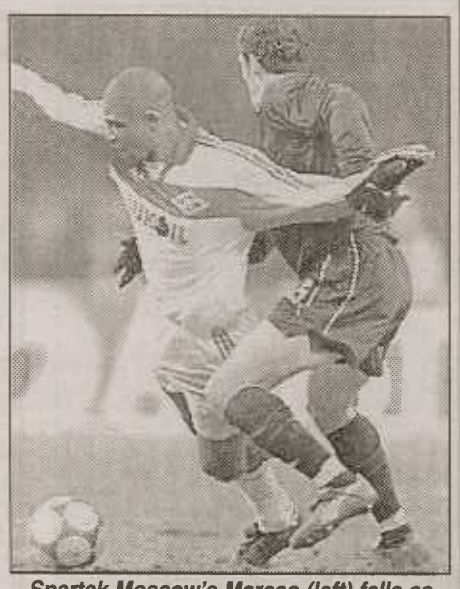
Arsenal shocked the Russians with an early goal by Silvinho but Spartak came racing back with the two goals by striker Marcao (28 and 50), one by Yegor Titov (76) and the fourth by Marcao's fellow Brazilian Robson (81).

The win delighted the 70,000-strong capacity crowd at the Luzhniki Stadium and preserved Spartak's record of not losing a Champions League tie at home so far in the competition.

On a night of freezing temperatures, Arsenal came out fighting and as well as Silvinho's goal also had other clear chances in the first minutes of the game.

But Spartak subjected the English side to strong pressure throughout the first half, leading to Marcao's equaliser.

The Russians were in command in the second half and Marcao was able to slot home after Robson chested a pass down to him in the mouth of Arsenal's goal.



Spartak Moscow's Marcao (left) falls as he battles for the ball with Artsenal's Martin Keown during their clash at Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium.

Titov's long shot and Robson's final goal completed a terrible night for the English side who have now lost four and drawn one of their last six games.

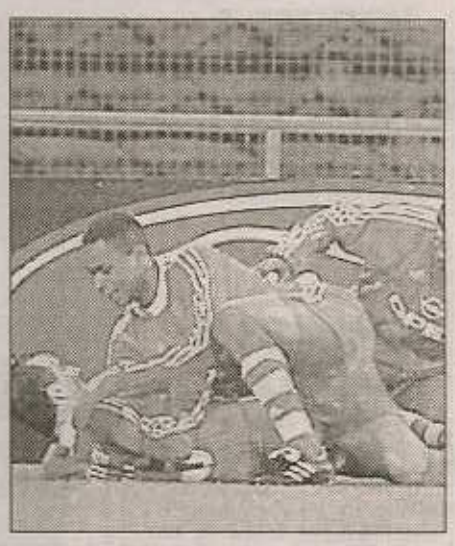
Spartak Moscow captain Yegor Titov (centre) celebrates with his teammates after winning their match against Arsenal by 4-1.

Jeremies secures Bayern win

Bayern Munich	1
Lyon	0

A 55th minute header by Germany midfielder Jens Jeremies gave Bayern Munich a 1-0 win over French side Olympique Lyon in their opening game in the second phase of the Champions League last week.

Bayern Munich's Paolo Sergio (left) challenges Lyon's Jeremie Brechet during their match at Munich's Olympic Stadium.



Bayern Munich's Jens Jeremies, Paolo Sergio and Samy Kuffour celebrate a goal during their win over Lyon.

Bayern, seeking a morale booster after losing their last two Bundesliga games, were out of sorts until Jeremies' header which was deflected by Lyon defender Patrick Mueller, leaving goalkeeper Gregory Coupet stranded.

The 1999 European Cup finalists woke up after taking the lead but were denied a second goal goal by a string of brilliant Coupet saves.

Lyon came close to equalising in the 72nd minute of the Group C match with a thunderous volley from defender Jeremie Brechet which Germany goalkeeper Oliver Kahn punched away.

Real Madrid ease past Leeds

Real Madrid's Fernando Hierro heads the ball to score for whilst under pressure from Leeds' Jonathan Woodgate, (2nd right), and Dominic Matteo, (left).

Leeds United	0
Real Madrid	2

Two goals in two minutes by Fernando Hierro and Raul midway through the second half gave Real Madrid a comfortable 2-0 away win at Leeds United last week in the first of their Group D second phase Champions League games.

Both sides hit the post in the first period — Jonathan Woodgate and Raul the unlucky men — while Real keeper Iker Casillas produced a good save to block out Dominic Matteo's header.

But Real dominated in terms of passing and possession and the defending champions' attacking quality finally wore down the injury-weakened hosts in the 66th minute when Hierro scored with a firm header from Luis Figo's right wing cross.

Two minutes later Raul latched on to Guti's clever pass to shoot home first time and secure Real's well-deserved win.

Leeds, lacking central midfield duo Eirik Bakke and Olivier Dacourt through injury and suspension, were full of running but most of it was chasing the ball as Real stroked it around.

Late strike stuns Lazio

Anderlecht	1
Lazio	0

An 85th minute strike by Canadian Tomasz Radzinski gave Anderlecht a well-earned 1-0 victory over Lazio in their Champions League second phase Group D match last week.

Lazio looked to have done enough to gain the draw they appeared to have come for when the super-quick Radzinski was put through by Besnik Hasi to drill the ball across goalkeeper Angelo Peruzzi into the far corner.

Anderlecht had the better of the play throughout but were almost left to rue their inability to bury a number of chances.

The highly-rated Lazio rarely threatened the Belgian side's goal, although Sinisa Mihajlovic rattled the Anderlecht bar with a free-kick from 35 metres after 29 minutes.

A match already marred by seven yellow cards was further spoiled when Dejan Stankovic was sent off in the last minute for stamping on Bart Goor.

Anderlecht's players celebrate Tomasz Radzinski's goal while Lazio's goalkeeper Luca Marchegiani looks dejected.

WORLD SERIE A

BARI 2 UDINESE 1

Bari's first win since May 7 thwarted Udinese's attempt to go top. South African striker Phil Masinga scored two close-range goals after coming on as a second half substitute.

Argentina's Roberto Carlos Sosa scored a consolation headed goal in injury time.

JUVENTUS 2 VERONA 1

A French double gave Juventus a vital win and coach Carlo Ancelotti some respite.

David Trezeguet scored the first with a first-half header before Zinedine Zidane curled home a beautiful free kick from 25 metres. Brazilian Adailton pulled one back but Juve held on to go fifth.

PARMA 2 LAZIO 0

Lazio's second defeat in five days and their second in the league this season saw them slump to eighth.

Their former midfielder Sergio Conceicao scored a classy opener and Sabri Lamouchi added a late second. Lazio's Fernando Couto was unlucky to be sent off for what appeared a fair challenge on Diego Fuser.

PERUGIA 1 BOLOGNA 3

Bologna had wrapped up an impressive away win by halftime thanks to a fortunate deflected strike from Giovanni Bia after two minutes and a diving header from Thomas Locatelli.

They scored a third straight after the break, the win taking them to fourth in the table.

REGGINA 0 BRESCIA 3

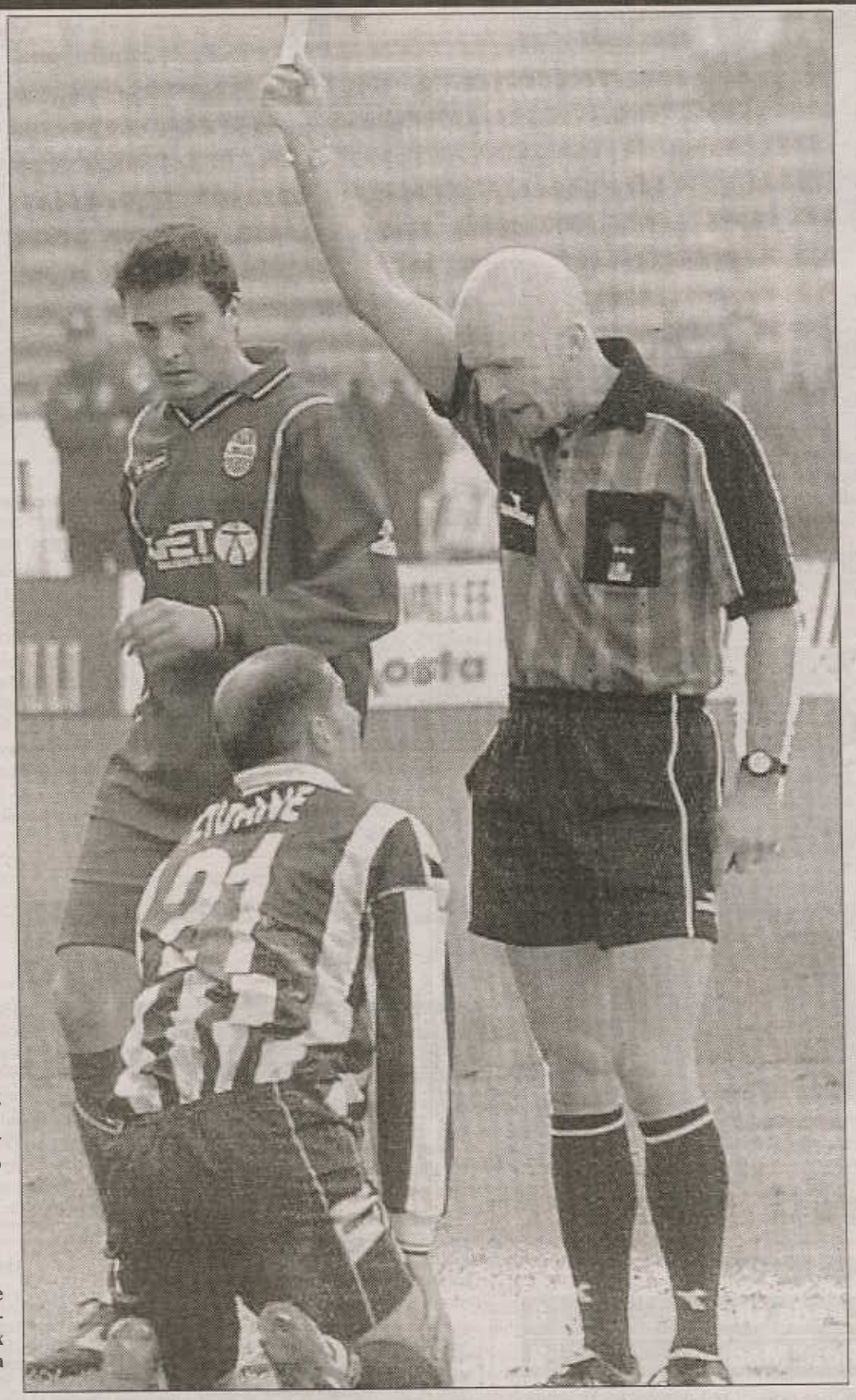
Crowd trouble caused the abandonment of this bottom-of-the-table clash six minutes from time after Brescia went 3-0 up.

Police intervened to stop Reggina fans hurling staves, plastic seats and water bottles on to the pitch. Brescia will almost certainly be awarded the victory — their first of the season.

AS ROMA 1 FIORENTINA 0

Gabriel Batistuta scored perhaps the most difficult goal of his career against the side he served for nine seasons before his move to Roma in July.

The Argentine striker refused to celebrate his 83rd minute strike and left the Olympic Stadium in tears after handing Roma a victory which takes them three points clear at the top.



Juventus midfielder Zinedine Zidane, kneels after being shown a yellow card by referee Danilo Nucini, as Verona's defender Natale Gonnella looks on.

VICENZA 0 INTER MILAN 0

A niggly draw which left Inter still in search of their first away win of the season. Christian Vieri made his first start since May 23 and played his first full 90 minutes since February.

Inter's Slovak defender Vratislav Gresko was sent off for a harsh handball decision.

ATALANTA 1 LECCE 0

Maurizio Ganz's first league goal for Atalanta was enough to give the Bergamo side a win which lifted them to second behind Roma.

Despite losing key players due to suspension relating to a match-fixing scandal Atalanta, promoted last season, are the only unbeaten side in Serie A.

AC MILAN 1 NAPOLI 0

A Massimo Ambrosini header just before halftime gave Milan their first victory at the San Siro since mid-October but Alberto Zaccheroni's injury-hit side were far from convincing.

Defender Emanuele Troise struck the bar with a header on the hour for an unlucky Napoli side who are still without a win.

Roma's Francesco Totti (right) is tripped up by Fiorentina's Sandro Cois.

RUSSO WRITES

By Joe Russo

Christian Vieri is back for Inter and he seems to be making regular appearances coming off the bench. His career is really amazing in many ways; his meteoric rise, his record transfer fees, his regular change of clubs and now his injuries.

Without any doubt Italy at Euro 2000 missed Vieri and his finishing has also been missing at Inter. The questions now are: - whether or not he will prove to be the Vieri of old? And, is there a striker or two good enough in Italy to replace him in the national team?

The first question is very difficult to answer and can only be judged 'on the park' and only after a substantial number of weeks that he has played. The second question's answer is very much a negative.

There are no strikers currently in Italy good enough to replace Vieri. While this situation persists he will be an integral part of national coach, Giovanni Trapattoni's, plans. Vieri can have all the time he wants to regain form and the national team will hold on with baited breath on his every move.

At this stage he will be an integral part of plans for the next World Cup campaign and only an injury can stand in his way. However, should he get injured again and have to spend long periods recovering, then we may have seen the last of Vieri in an Azzurri shirt.

For Italy's sake everyone will be hoping that Vieri stays healthy because the national team certainly needs him - not to mention his club side Inter.

AC Milan's 2-2 draw against Galatasaray last week in the Champions League must have brought back memories of when they were eliminated last year from the same competition by the very same team.

Galatasaray went on to win the UEFA Cup and AC Milan faded into European oblivion for the season. In fact, given the wonderful pedigree of the team, one could expect better from this great Northern Italian team.

Their last major European success (the old Champions Cup) was in 1994 when Fabio Capello was in charge there in his first stint and they defeated Barcelona 4-0 in Athens. Today is certainly a different era at Milan and while coach, Alberto Zaccheroni, has won a league title (Scudetto), he is certainly a novice when it comes to Europe.

Now it is time for Zaccheroni to prove himself beyond the boundaries of Italy and guide AC Milan to Champions League success.

Speaking of Capello, isn't it impressive to see him perform so well with his current club Roma? Roma are the pacesetters of the Serie A and this is in no small way thanks to Capello.

He is arguably one of the great club coaches of the modern era with four league titles in Italy and one in Spain (with Real Madrid) to his name amongst a long list of achievements.

Capello, disliked by a lot of media colleagues for the contempt with which he treats them, is still producing results at the highest levels.

However, Roma is more than just Capello and this is also a key factor in their success. Roma is Gabriel Batistuta and Francesco Totti as well.

Is there a better striker in the world than Batistuta? Is there a better Italian player, on current form, than Totti? Absolutely not on both accounts!

Batistuta is second greatest Argentinian player ever and the second greatest import ever in the Serie A (Diego Maradona is first on both these accounts).

Batistuta's signing from Fiorentina was a masterstroke and he is certainly having no trouble finding the back of the net. His captain Totti can't seem to put a foot wrong. The magnificent form he showed at Euro 2000 for Italy is certainly carrying over into his club form with Roma.

Roma haven't won a league title since 1983, when they were coached by the great Nils Liedholm and players such as Falcao, Bruno Conti and Roberto Pruzzo were household names.

It has been their only post-war championship and fans are certainly hungry for success given that cross-town rival Lazio took out the title last year.

If this form continues, then they are definitely on track for their second post-war title and names such as Batistuta and Totti will have their very first Serie A title, which they richly deserve.

WORLD PREMIER LEAGUE

LEEDS 1 ARSENAL 0

Both teams were anxious to get back to winning ways after midweek Champions League defeats and in a bruising encounter it was Leeds who took the points thanks to Olivier Dacourt's defelected free kick in the 55th minute.

Arsenal have now lost five and drawn one of their last seven league and cup games and trail leaders Manchester United by eight points.

NEWCASTLE UTD 2 LIVERPOOL 1

Liverpool's dire away run continued with their fifth defeat and again it was down to poor defending.

Nolberto Solano ran through the middle to put Newcastle ahead after four minutes and though Liverpool then dominated Newcastle scored a second in the 70th minute when Kieron Dyer latched on to a long clearance to chip Sander Westerveld.

Emile Heskey pulled one back after 78 minutes but despite late pressure they could not find the equaliser.

CHARLTON 0 SUNDERLAND 1

Pouring rain produced difficult conditions in South London and neither side was able to take command in the first half.

But in the 58th minute Alex Rae broke the deadlock with a left-foot shot from 25 metres wrecking Charlton's unbeaten home record which had stood since last April.

COVENTRY 1 ASTON VILLA 1

Coventry had to wait until the 83rd minute to grab a point from the Midlands derby.

Their former captain Dion Dublin, who had not scored for seven games, was on target for Villa in the eighth minute. Coventry equalised through Moroccan Mustapha Hadji to avoid clocking their sixth defeat in a row.

Everton players celebrate Kevin Campbells (Number 9) winning goal during their 2-1 win over Chelsea at Goodison Park).

DERBY 0 MAN UTD 3

Derby managed to keep United out until the 61st minute but then the champions' superiority showed. Teddy Sheringham scored from a neat Scholes move and pass for his 11th league goal.

Nicky Butt then netted a curler from 25 metres after a five-man move started by captain Roy Keane in the 69th.

Dwight Yorke finished it all off in the 76th after a sweeping passing move involving Sheringham and Butt. Luke Chadwick, 20 last week, made his first team debut for United in place of the rested David Beckham.

EVERTON 2 CHELSEA 1

On the stroke of halftime 19-year-old Italian Sam Dalla Bona scored from 25 metres for Chelsea after Everton failed to clear from a corner.

Two minutes into the second half Danny Cadamarteri equalised, slipping though a disorganised Chelsea defence.

Chelsea's Dutch international striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink was sent off late in second half after an off-ball fight. Shortly afterwards Kevin Campbell scored with a left-foot shot. Chelsea have not won away since last April.

MAN CITY 2 IPSWICH 3

Ipswich moved into the third place after goals from Marcus Stewart in the ninth and 53rd minutes and Hermann Hreidarsson in the 32nd.

City fought their way back into the match in the second half with goals from Paulo Wanchope and Steve Howey but they could not find a third.

MIDDLESBROUGH 2 BRADFORD 2

Dean Windass's first goal in 11 league matches came just three minutes into the game for Bradford and they were two ahead within 10 through a second by Benito Carbone.

Middlesbrough, fighting for manager Bryan Robson's job, piled on the pressure but Matthew Clarke in the Bradford goal looked on top form.

Middlesbrough got one back straight after the break, however, from a corner which Clarke palmed but failed to get away.

Ugo Ehiogu headed it home. Despite Middlesbrough's Argentine Carlos Marinelli being sent off, the home side equalised through Paul Ince in the final minute. It was his first goal since April.

SOUTHAMPTON 2 WEST HAM UTD 3

In an entertaining match, Southampton's Matt Oakley scored in 20th minute from a set piece after Latvian Marians Pahars's free-kick was parried by the West Ham defence.

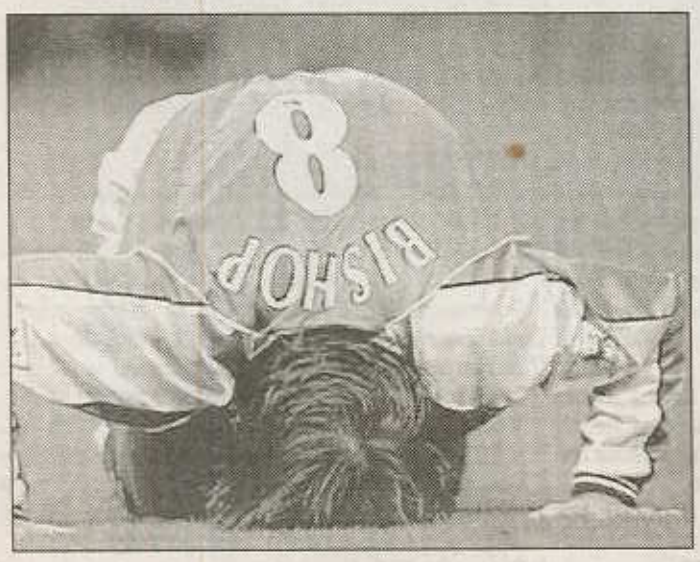
It was Oakley's first goal since January. Frederic Kanoute equalised in the 41st minute and Stuart Pearce's left-footed pile-driver from the edge of box put the visitors ahead two minutes later.

James Beattie equalised four minutes after the break but West Ham took all three points when Trevor Sinclair scored their third goal in the 69th minute.

TOTTENHAM 3 LEICESTER 0

Les Ferdinand scored a hat-trick for a convincing win. In the 34th minute he picked up the ball, ran 20 metres and unleashed an unstoppable shot from 25 metres.

Ferdinand pounced again following a corner in the 39th minute. Leicester's Gerry Taggart was sent off for two yellow cards midway through the second half when they looked to be coming back. But Ferdinand finished them off in the 84th.



Ian Bishop of Man City buries his head in the turf after his sides 2-3 loss at home to Ipswich Town.

Bradford player/manager Stuart McCall jumps on the back of Middlesbrough's Colin Cooper during the 2-2 draw between the two teams at the Riverside Stadiun in Middlesbrough.

MURPHY'S LAW

By Julian Murphy

There were a couple of lessons to be learnt from Real Madrid's stroll past Leeds United in last week's second group phase game in the Champions League. The first one is that Leeds are yet to be anything more than teenage bike riders on a competition highway consisting of Maserati's and Lotus'. It is a bit of a mystery how they squeezed through from the Group of Death and into the Group of Death, perhaps they managed to grab on to the bumper of the luck bus.

The experience David O'Leary's young side is getting from playing some of the world's best club sides will prove to be invaluable and they may not have been so outclassed by Real if a few more first team players weren't injured. Harry Kewell looks set to return to the side earlier than expected and obscenely expensive Rio Ferdinand will certainly help shore up the defence.

Unfortunately neither player, as well as a few others, will turn out for the next group game in Rome when the Yorkshire club will get absolutely stuffed by Lazio. After that forgone conclusion the quarter-finals will be just about out of reach, particularly considering that Leeds have to face Real again at the Bernabeau.

The second thing to take from the 0-2 defeat was that Steve McManaman should have an important role to play when England continue their World Cup qualifying campaign next year. The former Liverpool man's resurrection over the past few weeks has been remarkable and he will definitely be in Sven Goran Eriksson's thoughts.

McManaman has fought his way back into the Real Madrid first team after being told he wasn't required by the club in the off-season. This is exceptional considering the quality that exists in the Real squad and in particular, the Real midfield.

Real manager Vincente Del Bosque made it clear to McManaman that he was more than welcome to stay in Madrid if he didn't mind playing in the reserves.

McManaman weighed up his options before deciding to do a Bosnich and fight for his place on the team sheet. Luckily for him he has had a great deal more success than the beleaguered Australian keeper. After scoring the winner in a recent victory over Villareal, McManaman was superb at Elland Road, linking superbly with Ivan Helguera and winning the Man of the Match award.

McManaman may not be under 26 but he hasn't yet hit the 30 mark and, if he can continue to play regularly over the next 18 months, should be in the prime of his career come 2002. What his exact role in the England set up will be is up to Eriksson to decide but it is hard to see the astute coach ignoring his return to form.

With David Beckham shining and Paul Scholes, Steven Gerrard and Nick Barmby on the scene, Eriksson has a nice little selection problem. Whether or not these players can gel together against international opponents is a different matter.

However, McManaman has one thing going for him over other England hopefuls. He is the only player that is playing for a top side in a top competition outside of England and after the teams disastrous showing at Euro 2000, this experience could be crucial.

OOOO

Last season Wimbledon were relegated from the English Premier League thus ending one of football's modern fairytales. Naturally they lost some of the better players to higher profile clubs who weren't keen to play down a rung.

However these ex-Dons have been somewhat cursed as they have pursued their careers elsewhere. Carl Cort has been plagued by injuries at Newcastle and Ben Thatcher, who left for Spurs to improve his England hopes, isn't seeing much action.

Big striker John Hartson is still at the club but is having a tough time as well. Desperate to play at the top, he has seen moves to both Rangers and Charlton fall through. If he can keep his studs out of his team-mates faces, the no nonsense Welshman could be a good buy for a struggling club. But worth the hassle?

Zidane, Romario and Maldini to face Japan/South Korea XI

Zinedine Zidane

Top internationals like Zinedine Zidane, Romario and Paolo Maldini are to get a taste of the 2002 World Cup final venue in an exhibition match next year.

An international X1 will take on a combined team from the leagues of World Cup co-hosts Japan and South Korea on January 3 at the 70,000-capacity International Stadium Yokohama, match organisers said.

The international team, to be coached by former AC Milan and Italy manager Arrigo Sacchi, will include compatriot Maldini, Portugal's Rui Costa, France's Zidane and Brazil's Romario.

The Japan-Korea squad, with eight players from each league, will be managed jointly by Argentine Ossie Ardiles, coach of the Yokohama F Marinos, and South Korean Cho Kwang Rae of the Anyang LG Cheetahs.

Carlos Alberto Parreira: Walked out.

Parreira walks out on Santos

Former Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira has walked out on Santos after only 28 days in charge of the team, the club said last week.

Parreira, who led Brazil to World Cup victory in 1994, left the club saying he wanted to be near his family who live 450 kilometres away in Rio de Janeiro.

His departure came two days after Pele's former club failed to make the knockout stages of the Copa Joao Havelange which has replaced the Brazilian championship this year.

Santos had been struggling when Parreira, the club's third coach this year, took over. They won three games and lost three under his command.

Signs of tension as Eriksson fires back at criticism

England's future manager Sven Goran Eriksson has reacted strongly to criticism of his tactics in the first signs of tension with his club Lazio.

Eriksson's comments have been widely interpreted as a response to the club's general director Massimo Cragnotti, son of club president Sergio, who had criticised the coach's decision to play just one striker in the recent 1-1 draw against AC Milan.

"It is not very intelligent to talk outside of the dressing room about problems that need to stay inside, but unfortunately it happens," Eriksson was quoted in Italian newspapers as saying.

"I am not worried because our results do not look so bad. Maybe, however, someone is nervous."

"In general in football there is a search for a culprit to condemn when you lose, but at Lazio however, it seems that same process happens when we draw," added Eriksson.

Asked whether he would play with two strikers against the Belgians, Eriksson said: "It is completely my decision of course. No one has the right to interfere with my work. Among other things there are players who complain to journalists rather than me."

Massimo Cragnotti has become the public face of the club in recent months, appearing on numerous television shows and handling relations with the media in place of his father.

He has been rumoured to have vetoed Eriksson's presence at England's friendly match with Spain in Birmingham on February 28, although he has denied saying the coach's involvement in that game was "out of the question".

"I don't know what I will be doing on that day," said Eriksson, "It is a Wednesday and I will need to be at Formello (Lazio's training ground) to coach the squad, as long as I am still coach of Lazio."

Eriksson's decision to leave Lazio for England at the end of this season prompted some observers to fear that the coach may be distracted from his tasks at the Rome club and the team's performance may suffer.

However, Lazio are unbeaten since the Swede signed a five-year contract with the Football Association, winning three games and drawing their last two matches — away to Juventus and at home to Milan.

Eriksson has made a strong effort to keep clear of any discussions of the England team, which he says "irritate" him and although he watched the friendly in Turin with Italy recently, he did not meet the England team or coaching staff and avoided contact with the English media.

Sven Goran Eriksson: Tension mounting.

Rio Ferdinand: Record move.

West Ham accept record bid for Ferdinand

West Ham have accepted a record bid from Leeds United (LES.L) of 18 million pounds ($45 million) for England defender Rio Ferdinand, the London club said.

Hammers' coach Harry Redknapp said the final decision was down to the 22-year-old, who now stands to set a world record for a defender and a British record for any player.

West Ham had previously turned down a Leeds offer of 15 million pounds ($37.5 million).

But Redknapp told the club's website on Wednesday: "Leeds have come back in and made an 18 million pound offer and obviously it's a lot of money.

"I don't want to lose Rio, he's a fantastic player and will go on to be one of the best in Europe. I've never changed my opinion about that.

"But 18 million pounds breaks all sorts of records reallyand it's a difficult one to turn down."

"No-one is pushing him either way: it's his decision and his life," Redknapp said.

Leeds coach David O'Leary is already looking forward to seeing Ferdinand at Elland Road, and developing at both club and international level with Leeds defender Jonathon Woodgate.

O'Leary told the Leeds' website: "Eventually, you can see for England a wonderful partnership between Rio Ferdinand and Jonathon Woodgate.

"They are both wonderful people who could perform on the international stage. It struck me at Euro 2000, football is all about good technique and he would fit in with that because he is a good passer, and the way Leeds want to pass the ball would suit them perfectly."

Maradona ignores new club and watches Boca Juniors

Diego Maradona, appointed manager of struggling Argentine club Almagro last month, ignored his new team yet again last week, preferring to watch his old club Boca Juniors beat Talleres in a top-of-the-table clash.

Sport Recife striker Leonardo scored five goals in a Copa Joao Havelange match against Atletico Mineiro in Brazil.

Diego Maradona

Irapuato amazingly completed the qualifying stage of Mexico's Invierno (Winter) championship without a Mexican player having scored for them.

Boca Juniors have one hand on the Apertura trophy championship after overcoming Talleres 2-0 in the top-of-the-table clash, with an ecstatic Diego Maradona among the 45,000 crowd.

Juan Roman Riquelme, who missed his team's opening games because of a dispute over his new contract, opened the scoring on the stroke of halftime. The second came from Marcelo Delgado midway through the second half.

Maradona preferred to watch Boca, his old club, than Almagro, where he was appointed team manager last month.

Maradona has yet to see Almagro in action. They remained rooted to the bottom of the table without a win after a 1-1 draw at home to Huracan.

Mihajlovic says Yugoslavia need fresh blood

Yugoslavia's central defender Sinisa Mihajlovic said the national team's ageing players should make way for youngsters, the daily Glas Javnosti reported last week.

Mihajlovic, who plays his club football for Italian champions Lazio, made the comment following Yugoslavia's lacklustre performance in last week's 2-1 defeat by Romania in a friendly in which he scored his side's lone goal.

"The time has come for talented youngsters to take over and show their quality. My generation has wasted a number of opportunities," he said, referring to poor results in the 1998 World Cup and Euro 2000.

"We always qualify for the big event but we never make an impact when we get there."

Yugoslavia were eliminated from both tournaments in the second round after scraping through the group stage.

Mihajlovic said young players should be the squad's new backbone even if it was a big gamble.

"Of course it's risky but I would take that chance even at the expense of not qualifying for the 2002 World Cup. The long-term gain would be having a proper team for Euro 2004 and the future," he said.

Mihajlovic was widely depicted in the media as one of the main culprits for Yugoslavia's below-par performances at the European championship finals and their disastrous exit in a 6-1 drubbing by co-hosts The Netherlands.

Sinisa Mihajlovic: New blood.

Earlier this year he said he had retired from international football and vowed never to play again for his country.

"I changed my mind because I missed the national team and everybody there. But I still think my time belongs to the past," he said.

Mihajlovic, reported to have clashed with former manager Vujadin Boskov at Euro 2000, said team leadership had been a major problem destroying Yugoslav football.

"A few stalwarts, including myself, would never be criticised or left on the bench. Youngsters with no authority on the pitch would pay the price and that's no good," he said.

"A coach must elect the first 11 without being sentimental to anyone. Only then will the team live up to expectations."

Kewell could be back for Leeds within three weeks

Australia international forward Harry Kewell could be back in action for Leeds United within three weeks, coach David O'Leary said.

Kewell, who has not played for the premier league club since the last game of last season following Achilles surgery, was not expected to return until the New Year.

But O'Leary believes the 22-year-old could feature in United's Champions League game against Lazio on December 6.

"The big problem is that Harry missed the whole of pre-season and that is six weeks of training that sets you up for the season," O'Leary said.

"But the good news is that he started light training last week and he's gradually stepping up the workload.

"I'm hopeful that we'll have him back and ready to play inside the next three weeks."

Harry Kewell

Kewell, last season's Young Player of the Year, had a major role in Leeds' third-place finish last season, booking them into the Champions League qualifiers. In August, he dashed speculation of a move to a major European club by signing a new contract at Elland Road until 2004.

Cole on road to comeback

England striker Andy Cole has targeted a January return after a successful operation on his Achilles tendon.

The Manchester United forward had to undergo surgery last week because the tendon became inflamed after each match.

Andy Cole

The injury had been bothering Cole for several months despite a superb opening to the season in which time he scored nine goals in 15 games for United.

"The operation went really well for me. The specialist stripped the Achilles down and cleared it up. I hope to be back on my feet in 10 days and if things go well I could be back for United in mid-January," Cole said.

He is currently on crutches but already has his comeback routine worked out as he follows in the footsteps of team mate Jaap Stam. The Dutch international underwent a similar operation two months ago and hopes to return to action before the end of the year.

Flo joins Rangers

Norwegian international striker Tore Andre Flo completed his 12 million pound ($30m) move to Rangers late last week and the former Chlesea striker has begun to repay his sides faith in him after scoring a goal in Rangers' 5-1 win over Glasgow rivals Celtic at Ibrox.

Flo's signing ended a five-year pursuit by the Glasgow club's manager Dick Advocaat with the deal doubling the previous Scottish record of 6 million pounds ($15m) paid by Celtic, also to Chelsea, earlier this year for another striker, Chris Sutton.

Advocaat said at the press conference to parade his new signing that he has been trying to catch up with Flo ever since the player was an unknown at SK Brann.

"He destroyed my old club PSV Eindhoven on his own and knocked us out of the UEFA Cup," explained Advocaat. "And I have been watching him ever since."

Flo, 27, has signed a four-and-a-half year contract and Advocaat recalled: "I tried to get him to PSV the year Ronaldo left (to join Barcelona) but he was going to Chelsea.

"I tried many times when he was with Chelsea. I spoke to his agent when Flo was with Norway during Euro 2000 but he was committed to Chelsea.

"I watched with interest the Chelsea line-up every week and for me it was good when he was not in the team. Now that he is finally coming to Rangers, it is great.

"It is a lot of money," said the Dutch coach. "Maybe too much for one player but that is the price we have to pay for a player of his quality and these are the market prices."

Tore Andre Flo: Scottish record move.

Flo admitted it had been a wrench to leave Chelsea where he had spent four seasons, but had grown increasingly frustrated by his limited role in coming off the bench to turn games.

"I like Chelsea very much and it is a great club but unfortunately for me I didn't play enough and I had to do something about it," he said.

"This chance has come up and what makes it easier to move is that Rangers is a very big club and hopefully I can win some things here."

Flo is ineligible for Rangers' UEFA Cup campaign, which merely heightens the pressure on him to deliver at domestic level and prevent the Scottish title falling into Celtic's hands.

Flo joined Chelsea from SK Brann in Norway for a bargain 300,000 pounds in August 1997 and scored 47 goals in 162 appearances - many as a substitute.

He has scored 22 goals for Norway in 52 internationals.

WORLD

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

GROUP A

Manchester Utd 3 Panathinaikos 1
T. Sheringham 48, P. Scholes 80, 90 — G. Karagounis 64
Halftime: 0-0; Attendance: 65,024

Valencia 2 Sturm Graz 0
John Carew 45, Juan Sanchez 47
Halftime: 1-0; Attendance: 27,000

Table

Manchester Utd	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
Valencia	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Panathinaikos	1	0	0	1	1	3	0
Sturm Graz	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

Remaining Fixtures:
Wednesday, December 6
Panathinaikos v Valencia
Sturm Graz v Manchester United

Wednesday, February 14
Sturm Graz v Panathinaikos
Valencia v Manchester United

Tuesday, February 20
Panathinaikos v Sturm Graz
Manchester United v Valencia

Wednesday, March 7
Sturm Graz v Valencia
Panathinaikos v Manchester United

Tuesday, March 13
Valencia v Panathinaikos
Manchester United v Sturm Graz

Manchester United's Teddy Sheringham and team mate David Beckham celebrate after their 3-1 win over Panathinaikos at Old Trafford.

GROUP B

Paris St Germain 1 Deportivo Coruna3
Jimmy Algerino 38 — N. Naybet 63, T. Flores 70, R. Makaay 90
Halftime: 1-0; Attendance: 31,890

AC Milan 2 Galatasaray 2
J. Mari 48, A. Shevchenko 73pen — M. Jardel 39, Hasan Sas 41
Halftime: 0-2; Attendance: 46,324

Table

Deportivo	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
AC Milan	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Galatasaray	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Paris St Germain	1	0	0	1	1	3	0

Remaining Fixtures:
Wednesday, December 6
Deportivo Coruna v AC Milan
Galatasaray v Paris St Germain

Wednesday, February 14
Galatasaray v Deportivo Coruna
AC Milan v Paris St Germain

Tuesday, February 20
Deportivo Coruna v Galatasaray
Paris St Germain v AC Milan

Wednesday, March 7
Galatasaray v AC Milan
Deportivo Coruna v Paris St Germain

Tuesday, March 13
AC Milan v Deportivo Coruna
Paris St Germain v Galatasaray

Deportivo La Coruna striker Roy Makaay celebrates his goal against PSG during their 3-1 win away at the Parc des Princes Stadium.

GROUP C

Spartak Moscow 4 Arsenal 1
Marcao 29, 51, Yegor Titov 77, Robson 82 — Silvinho 2
Halftime: 1-1; Attendance: 70,000

Bayern Munich 1 Olympique Lyon 0
Jens Jeremies 55
Halftime: 0-0; Attendance: 18,000

Table

Spartak Moscow	1	1	0	0	4	1	3
Bayern Munich	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Olympique Lyon	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Arsenal	1	0	0	1	1	4	0

Remaining Fixtures:
Tuesday, December 5
Arsenal v Bayern Munich
Olympique Lyon v Spartak Moscow

Tuesday, February 13
Olympique Lyon v Arsenal
Bayern Munich v Spartak Moscow

Wednesday, February 21
Arsenal v Olympique Lyon
Spartak Moscow v Bayern Munich

Tuesday, March 6
Olympique Lyon v Bayern Munich
Arsenal v Spartak Moscow

Wednesday, March 14
Bayern Munich v Arsenal
Spartak Moscow v Olympique Lyon

Spartak Moscow's Marcao celebrates after scoring in his sides 4-1 win of English against Arsenal at Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium.

GROUP D

Leeds United 0 Real Madrid 2
F. Hierro 66, Raul 68
Halftime: 0-0; Attendance: 36,794

Anderlecht 1 Lazio 0
T. Radzinski 85
Red card: Dejan Stankovic (Lazio) 90
Halftime: 0-0; Attendance: 21,631

Table

Real Madrid	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Anderlecht	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Lazio	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Leeds United	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

Remaining Fixtures:
Tuesday, Decmeber 5
Lazio v Leeds United
Real Madrid v Anderlecht

Tuesday, February 13
Real Madrid v Lazio
Leeds United v Anderlecht

Wednesday, February 21
Lazio v Real Madrid
Anderlecht v Leeds United

Tuesday, March 6
Real Madrid v Leeds United
Lazio v Anderlecht

Wednesday, March 14
Leeds United v Lazio
Anderlecht v Real Madrid

Real Madrid's Fernando Hierro (left) celebrates with Steve McManaman after scoring against Leeds United in their 2-0 win at Elland Road.

SECOND PHASE
November 21/22 to March 13/14, 2001

QUARTER-FINAL
First Leg — April 3/4
Second Leg — April 17/18, 2001

SEMI-FINAL
First Leg — May 1/2
Second Leg — May 8/9, 2001

FINAL
Wednesday, May 23
In Milan

FIFA World Rankings

(Valid until December 15)

FIFA founded 1904

1	Brazil	69	Congo DR	136	Luxemburg
2	France	70	Kuwait	138	Lesotho
3	Argentina	71	China PR	139	Fiji
4	Czech Republic	72	Estonia	140	Grenada
5	Italy	73	Burkina Faso	141=	Ethiopia
6	Spain	74=	**AUSTRALIA**	141=	Tajikistan
7	Portugal	74=	FYR Macedonia	143	Korea DPR
8	Germany	76	Cuba	144	Liechtenstein
9	Yugoslavia	76	Bosnia-Herzegovina	145	Andorra
10	Netherland	78	Guinea	146	St Kitts & Nevis
11	Mexico	79	Lithuania	147=	Antigua & Barbuda
12	Paraguay	80	Iraq	147=	Benin
13	Romania	81	Albania	149	Bangladesh
14	Norway	82	Algeria	150	Dominica
15	Colombia	83	Togo	151=	Botswana
16=	England	84	Haiti	151=	Sri Lanka
16=	Croatia	85	Congo	153	Bermuda
18	United States	86	Namibia	154	Maldives
19	Chile	87	Senegal	155	Gambia
20	Scotland	88	Gabon	156	Dominican Republic
21	Russia	89	El Salvador	157	Cape Verde Islands
22	Sweden	90=	Northern Ireland	158	Cayman Islands
23	South Africa	90=	Armenia	159	Yemen
24	Denmark	92	New Zealand	160	Mauritania
25	Tunisia	93	Mali	161	Chinese Taipei
26	Belgium	94	Latvia	162	Chad
27	Slovakia	95=	Liberia	163=	Surinam
28=	Morocco	95=	Belarus	163=	Eritrea
28=	Turkey	97	Moldova	165	Laos
30	Trinidad & Tobago	98	Vietnam SR	166	Nepal
31	Ukraine	99	Qatar	167=	Vanuatu
32	Egypt	100	Singapore	167=	Cambodia
33	Ireland Republic	101	Syria	169	San Marino
34	Japan	102	Barbados	170	Cook Islands
35	Saudi Arabia	103	Uganda	171	Palestine
36=	Uruguay	104=	Jordan	172	British Virgin Is.
36=	Israel	104=	Indonesia	173	Samoa
38	Slovenia	106	Kenya	174	Netherlands Antilles
39	Korea Republic	107	Wales	175	Kyrgyzstan
40=	Iran	108	Oman	176=	Guinea-Bissau
40=	Cameroon	109	Malaysia	176=	Central African Rep.
42	Greece	110	Lebanon	178	Bahamas
42	Austria	111	Venezuela	179=	Sao Tome e Principe
44	Poland	112	Mozambique	179=	Macao
45	Peru	113	Malawi	181	Niger
46	Jamaica	114	Azerbaijan	182	Philippines
47	Zambia	115	Madagascar	182	Guyana
48	Hungary	116=	Faroe Islands	184	Tonga
49	Iceland	116=	India	185	Aruba
50	Honduras	118=	Malta	186	Belize
51	Nigeria	118=	Mauritius	187	Equatorial Guinea
52	Cote d' Ivoire	120	Libya	188	Seychelles
53	Angola	121	Kazakhstan	189	Pakistan
54	Bulgaria	122	Panama	190	Nicaragua
55	Finland	123	Myanmar	191	Papua New Guinea
56	Costa Rica	124	Turkmenistan	192	Djibouti
56	Ghana	125	St Vincent/Gr	193	Brunei Darussalam
58	Ecuador	126	Sierra Leone	194	Puerto Rico
59	Switzerland	127	Rwanda	195	Somalia
60	UAE	128	Hong Kong	196	Mongolia
61	Guatemala	129	Burundi	197=	Anguilla
62	Thailand	130=	Tahiti	197=	US Virgin Islands
63	Canada	130=	Sudan	199	Turks and Caicos Is
64	Georgia	132	Solomon Islands	200	Bhutan
65	Uzbekistan	133	St Lucia	200	Guam
66	Bolivia	134	Bahrain	202	Montserrat
67	Cyprus	135	Swaziland	203	American Samoa
68	Zimbabwe	136	Tanzania		

***Note:** Teams inactive since 1991 and teams which have not played yet to do not appear in the table.*

Brazil Congress quizzes Zagallo over Nike

Former Brazil coach Mario Zagallo appeared before a Congressional commission last week and denied that sportswear giants and national team sponsors Nike had interfered in the picking of the team when he was in charge.

"I picked the team myself, there was never any interference from Nike or the CBF (Brazilian Football Confederation)," he told the commission, one of two created by Congress to investigate the country's crisis-hit national sport.

"If there had been interference, I would have resigned," said the veteran coach in an often heated three-hour session. "I have never accepted interference as coach of any club or national team."

Congress has begun the investigations, one in the lower house and one in the Senate, amid a public outcry over the way Brazil's so-called "national passion" is administered.

The last 12 months have seen domestic chaos, poor results at international level and a series of scandals, one allegedly involving former national team coach

Mario Zagallo: Angered.

Wanderley Luxemburgo who was sacked in September.

Zagallo was asked about the 1998 World Cup final against France when star player Ronaldo, who has a personal contract with Nike, played for 90 minutes despite reports that he had suffered a convulsive fit only hours earlier.

Zagallo, 69, replied that he included Ronaldo in the team after being given the all-clear by the team doctors. Ronaldo gave a subdued performance, Brazil lost 3-0 and Zagallo was sacked one week later.

"I had the results of examinations taken by a French clinic saying there was no problem. Imagine, a player of his standing was in front of me asking me to play and 160 million Brazilians at home wanting him in the team," said Zagallo, now coach of Rio de Janeiro club Flamengo.

"Imagine, reversing the situation, if we lost 3-0 and I hadn't played him. Then they would have said Zagallo is stubborn and that sort of thing."

Zagallo, who won the World Cup as a player in 1958 and 1962 and as Brazil coach in 1970, added: "My contract was with the CBF. I have got nothing to do with the problem with Nike and the CBF. There was never any interference of any kind in the team."

He added, though, that on one occasion during the World Cup, the Brazil team had been forced to drive around Paris after training session to attend and Nike-sponsored event. "We finished the training and went to this event, where there were festivities," he said.

Zagallo lost his temper at the start of the session, when one member of the commission claimed he had written a letter last year urging that the inquiry not take place.

A furious Zagallo shouted: "I did not write this letter. I'm not dishonest. My life is clean." Asked to be quiet, he shouted: "How can I be quiet when I hear something like this."

Italian footballer wakes briefly from coma

An Italian footballer who was knocked into a coma in a post-match brawl last weekend opened his eyes briefly during the week, a doctor at the hospital said.

Modena midfielder Francesco Bertolotti has been kept in a coma when he needed several hours of surgery to reduce two blood clots on his brain after he was punched and then fell hard onto the dressing room floor.

Doctors at Lecco's Sant'Anna hospital said they had stopped inducing the coma briefly at which point Bertolotti moved slightly and opened his eyes. He was then drugged back into a comatose state.

"It is a good sign," said Cristiano Martini, one of the doctors who operated on Bertolotti after the incident, which followed Modena's Serie C match against Como, won 1-0 by Como.

"We now have much more hope for the patient's recovery, albeit a slow one," he said, adding they had to keep Bertolotti in a coma for the therapy to work.

The hospital bulletin said it would make no prognosis on the player's condition yet.

After the incident, Como player Massimo Ferrigno, 26, was questioned by police and was told he was being investigated for alleged grievous bodily harm. He is due to appear before a magistrate on November 28, his lawyer said.

Ferrigno has apologised for the incident, saying he never imagined a punch could lead to Bertolotti falling, hitting his head and ending up in a coma.

The Italian Football Federation (FIGC) have suspended Ferrigno, without saying for how long and Como said he would never play for them again.

"His behaviour is indefensible and unpardonable. We can't forgive him and so we must distance ourselves from him," the club's president Enrico Preziosi said.

Sergio Campani, president of Italy's Footballers' Association, called the incident an outrage and said the perpetrator should be dealt with severely.

Brazil investigators seek source of fake passports

A Congressional commission investigating Brazilian soccer spread to Portugal last week as two of its members arrived in Lisbon in their search for the so-called mafia of fake passports.

The two Congressmen, Pedro Celso and Jurandi Juarez, are investigating the issue of counterfeit Portuguese passports to help Brazilian players move to Europe, a spokesmen for the commission said.

At least five Brazilian players have been caught in Europe with fake Portuguese documents in the last three months, and they have been summoned by the commission for an interview. The commission wants to know how the players got hold of the forged passports.

The most high profile case involved Corinthians midfielder Edu, whose transfer to English premier league side Arsenal fell through when he was caught with a forged document at London's Heathrow airport. Edu was sent back to Brazil on the next plane.

"They (Celso and Juarez) will speak to agents who make the contacts to sign up Brazilian players," the spokesman said.

Brazilian players can move abroad more easily if they have a European Community passport.

The commission in the lower house is one of two which have been set up by Congress to investigate Brazil's national sport.

The investigations began following a public outcry over the chaotic adminstration of the sport in Brazil.

Angry fans wreck Limpar's bar in Stockholm

Angry soccer fans wrecked a bar at the weekend part-owned by former AIK Stockholm midfielder Anders Limpar who has joined city rivals Djurgarden.

In a formal complaint to police last week the owners said three fans, who belonged to a fanatical wing of AIK's supporters, spat at Limpar, called him a traitor and ripped down AIK emblems in the bar on the Saturday night. Later, both big windows in the corner bar were smashed.

Limpar, 34, who played for AIK when they won the Swedish championship in 1998 and who has also played for Arsenal and Everton in England and for Colorado Rapids in the United States wanted to return to AIK next season.

When AIK turned him down, Limpar signed a contract with Djurgarden under which he receives no regular salary but a bonus for every win.

Djurgarden have won promotion to the Swedish first division in which AIK and Hammarby, another Stockholm rival, also play.

Anders Limpar

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FA agree to meet O'Leary over congestion fear

The Football Association (FA) have agreed to meet Leeds United manager David O'Leary to discuss his concern that fixture congestion is harming the prospects of English clubs in European competition.

O'Leary has called for a reduction in the size of the English premier league as well as fewer international friendlies and greater flexibility in the domestic schedule for teams involved in Europe.

The FA said they were prepared to listen to O'Leary's grievances even though they only have jurisdiction over internationals. The domestic schedule is set by the premier league.

Quoted on the FA's website, executive director David Davies said: "The matters which he (O'Leary) has expressed concern about are clearly very important to him and we would like to discuss them with him."

Leeds, who lost 2-0 to Real Madrid in the first match of the second stage of the Champions League have been struggling to cope after a string of injuries to top players this season.

O'Leary spoke out about fixture congestion saying: "We want to compete against the best clubs in Europe but we are not meeting them on an even playing field because we are expected to play far more games than them.

"We are in danger of burning our best young players in this country because we don't give them enough breaks."

Any plans to reduce the size of England's premier league or alter the scheduling would need the approval of two thirds of the 20 top-flight chairmen.

Bayern Munich's commercial manager Uli Hoeness called for a cutback in the number of matches in the Champions League and said his club would be prepared to take less cash to play fewer games.

"I can foresee huge problems if we don't sort out these issues. UEFA's motto is "Good for football." But it's not good for football if we have 17 games to get to the final. Thirteen would be enough," Hoeness said.

David O'Leary: Too many games.

Paraguayan defender killed in car crash

Paraguayan defender Mariano Villamayor was killed in a car crash last week and two of his team mates were seriously injured, two days after their club won a crucial match in the national championship.

Police said 22-year-old Villamayor, who had played for his country at under-17 level, died when his car was in collision with a bus in the final. The accident happened 30 kilometres east of Asuncion.

Twenty-year-old Miguel Portillo and 25-year-old striker Raul Arviniagaldez, who were also in the car, are in hospital with serious injuries, police said.

They play for the Guarani club, who caused a major upset by beating Cerro Porteno 2-1 to reach the final of the Paraguayan championship's second stage.

Villamayor was acclaimed by commentators as being one of the heroes of the shock win.

Guarani are due to play Olimpia next Sunday but have asked for the game to be postponed.

Clemente takes over at Marseille

Former Spanish national team boss Javier Clemente has agreed to take over as coach of French first division strugglers Olympique Marseille, the club's official website said over the weekend.

"It's official," said the site, announcing that Clemente had agreed to a deal until the end of the season with an option for a further 12 months.

His first match in charge will be the home game with St Etienne.

"I am proud that the Marseille officials thought of me to take over," Clemente said.

Marseille suffered a 3-0 loss away to Bastia last Saturday after parting company with Brazilian Abel Braga last weekend.

In an interview Clemente said he had turned down an offer from an unidentified English club and confirmed he was set to join Marseille.

Clemente said the Marseille job was a challenging one.

Javier Clemente: Former Spanish national coach, now in charge at Marseille.

"Olympique are one of the great teams in French and European football that are going through a difficult time at present," he said.

"Although I prefer the style of English football the offer from Marseille was more interesting.

"For me to train Olympique will be a real challenge.

Recently I have coached bottom of the table teams, so I have some experience in this and have been under the microscope constantly, but I don't mind that."

Clemente, 50, was in charge of the Spanish national team between 1992-98. He has coached several Spanish club sides including Athletic Bilbao, Espanyol, Atletico Madrid, Real Betis and Real Sociedad.

He was sacked by Real Sociedad last month after a string of poor results.

ANELKA OUT UNTIL NEW YEAR

French international striker Nicolas Anelka could be out of action until the New Year after suffering a recurrence to a thigh injury over the weekend.

Anelka limped off after just nine minutes of Paris St Germain's French first division match against Lille, which had to be abandoned at 1-1 when heavy rain made the pitch unplayable in the second half.

Anelka is likely to miss up to six league matches, as well as PSG's Champions League match away to Galatasaray on December 6, club officials said.

"Nicolas will be out injured for a good length of time," said PSG coach Philippe Bergeroo. "His absence will pose us a lot of problems, but we'll have to find a solution."

Anelka returned to action against Lille after being absent for almost three weeks with the same injury.

Nicolas Anelka: Out until the new year.

TV GUIDE

 # All times are Australian Eastern Standard Summer Time

TUESDAY NOV 28
English Premier League highlights
Fox Sports
12pm — 1pm

Futbol Mundial
SBS TV
4pm — 4.30pm

Toyota Cup Final
Real Madrid vs Boca Juniors (LIVE)
Fox Sports
8.30pm — 11pm

Toyota Cup Final
Real Madrid vs Boca Juniors (LIVE)
SBS TV
10pm — 12am

WEDNESDAY NOV 29
Toyota Cup Final
Real Madrid vs Boca Juniors
Fox Sports
1pm — 3pm

The Mourning After
Three years after Australia vs Iran
SBS TV
7pm — 7.30pm

Soccer Central
Optus (C7 Sport 12)
7.30pm — 8.30pm

European Soccer Show
Optus (C7 Sport 12)
10pm — 11pm

THURSDAY NOV 30
Scottish Premier League
Hibernian vs Celtic (LIVE)
Optus (ESPN)
6.30am — 9am

FRIDAY DECEMBER 1
National Soccer League
Parramatta vs Sydney United (LIVE)
Optus (C7 Sport 12)
7.30pm - 9.30pm

SATURDAY DEC 2
Spanish Primera Liga
Fox Sports 2
1pm — 3pm

UEFA Champions League
SBS TV
3.30pm — 4.30pm

World Soccer
SBS TV
4.30pm — 5.30pm

GOL ESPN
Football Extra
5pm — 5.30pm

National Soccer League
Canberra vs South Melbourne (LIVE)
Optus (C7 Sport 12)
6.30pm - 8.30pm

English Premier League
Teams TBA (LIVE)
Fox Sports 2
1.55am — 4am
(Sunday Morning)

SUNDAY DECEMBER 3
Italian Serie A
Teams TBA (LIVE)
Optus (ESPN)
6.25am - 8.30am

English Premier League
Replay of overnight match
Fox Sports 2
10am — 12pm

Italian Serie A
SBS TV
10.30am — 11.30am

On the Ball
SBS TV
11.30am — 12.30pm

Scottish Premier League
Teams TBA
1pm — 3pm

English Premier League
Chelsea vs Man City (LIVE)
Fox Sports 2
2am — 5.30am
(Monday Morning)

MONDAY DECEMBER 4
Italian Serie A
Teams TBA (LIVE)
Optus (ESPN)
6.25am - 8.30am

English Premier League
Chelsea vs Man City
Fox Sports
1pm — 3pm

English Premier League
Highlights
Fox Sports 2
6.30pm — 7.30pm

English Premier League
Highlights
SBS TV
7.30pm — 8.30pm

English Premier League
Chelsea vs Man City
Fox Sports 2
8.30pm — 10.30pm

TUESDAY DECEMBER 5
English Premier League
Sunderland vs Everton (LIVE)
Fox Sports
6am — 9.30am

Venables to help with Boro Crisis

Terry Venables: Looks headed for the top job at Boro.

Former England manager Terry Venables has been approached to join Bryan Robson at troubled Premier League side Middlesbrough, according to newspaper reports.

Venables, who coached England to the semi-finals of the European championships in 1996 with Robson as one of his assistants, has recently been passed over for the vacant England job.

The News of the World and *The Mail* last week both claimed Venables was asked to help the club at a meeting in London with club chairman Steve Gibson and Robson last week.

The News of the World said Robson would step down and be replaced by Venables in the manager's job, while *The Mail* said he would assist Robson in the role.

Venables told the *News of the World*: "There's a huge job to be done at Middlesbrough and they are struggling at the moment.

"I only thought I would return to management for the England job but if ever two people can change my mind it's Gibson and Robson.

"I have a lot of big decisions to make now. I have many commitments outside of football and this is something I must think long and hard about."

Middlesbrough are struggling in the relegation zone.

REAL MADRID DETERMINED TO CONTINUE EUROPEAN DOMINATION

Real Madrid, in Tokyo for the Intercontinental Cup clash with Boca Juniors, are determined to continue Europe's domination of the annual challenge, seeing the world's most expensive player Luis Figo as key.

Club president Florentino Perez, claiming Real to be the best supported team in the world with 80 million fans, said the club would be pushing for their third world club victory in the match.

"It means a lot to the club because by some estimates there are 80 million Real Madird fans around the world, making us the most universal club," Perez said.

"We want to win the Intercontinental Cup for a third time for all of them."

Real arrived in Japan in good heart following the" 2-0 victory over England's Leeds United in the European Champions League.

Real will meet South American champions Boca Juniors, Argentina's most passionately supported club and the favourite team of former star Diego Maradona.

The last South American team to win the annual clash between the club champions of Europe and South America was Argentina's Velez Sarsfield in 1994.

On Figo, who will play in the match, Perez said he was delighted with the form of his world record signing Portuguese midfielder.

Perez, who ousted previous president Lorenzo Sanz after setting up Figo's transfer from Real's bitter rivals, Barcelona, before the start of the season, said the 28-year-old player was good business.

Real Madrid players warm during a training session ahead of their World Club Cup match against Boca Juniors.

"He is one of the best players in the world and is good business for Real Madrid, not just in sporting terms but also for economic reasons," he said.

"In life nothing is too expensive, and I am sure that we will win a lot of money with Figo in the team.

"He is a good professional, the best professional, and his life in Barcelona is now forgotten because he is at the best club in the world," Perez said.

UEFA CUP

Inter hold on to draw in Berlin

HERTHA BERLIN	0
INTER MILAN	0

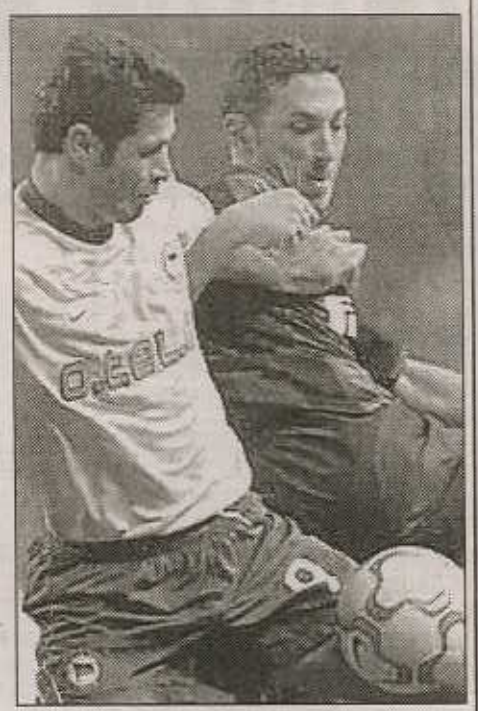
Hertha Berlin were held to a 0-0 draw by Inter Milan in the first leg of their third-round UEFA Cup match after strong defending by the Italian side repeatedly denied the dominant home side.

Hertha had most of the possession and most of the chances in a pacy first half, with Iranian striker Ali Daei forcing a save from Inter's Sebastian Frey after five minutes and midfielder Rene Tretschok missing with his weaker right foot soon after.

Inter responded quickly on the break and Turkish striker Hakan Sukur went close after seven minutes, while Uruguayan striker Alvaro Recoba cleverly beat offside with a great run in the 18th minute only to shoot wide.

Italy striker Christian Vieri came on early in the second half but was clearly still some way off full fitness and did not unduly trouble Hertha's Hungarian goalkeeper Gabor Kiraly.

The quality of Hertha's passing diminished as the half wore on and the German side were unable to break down Inter's resolute defence, although Frey did well to hold a strong strike from Hertha's Hungarian midfielder Pal Dardai four minutes from time but Inter held on.



Inter Milan's Bruno Cirillo (right) tackles Hertha striker Ali Daei during their 0-0 draw in Berlin.

Liverpool squander chances and settle with draw

OLYMPIAKOS	2
LIVERPOOL	2

Alekos Alexandris scored his second goal in injury time to salvage a 2-2 draw for Olympiakos Piraeus in their UEFA Cup third round, first leg tie last week.

Liverpool had spurned countless second half chances to win their away leg.

The English premier league side went ahead in the 38th minute from their first threatening attack.

A swift break down the right saw Danny Murphy cross to Emile Heskey. His flicked header was met by the onrushing Nick Barmby who volleyed it first time past goalkeeper Dimitris Eleftheropoulos.

Olympiakos equalised in the 64th minute with a superb bicycle kick from Alexandris.

But before the celebrations died down Liverpool were ahead again, England midfielder Steven Gerrard glancing in a header from Barmby's cross.

Defender Steve Staunton rattled the bar and Vladimir Smicer had a shot touched on to the post as Liverpool threatened to put the tie beyond Olympiakos's reach.

But Alexandris spoiled Liverpool's night by firing in the equaliser from close range.

Olympiakos' Christos Patsatzoglou is challenged by Liverpool's Djimi Traore (rear) during their UEFA Cup soccer match in Athens' Olympic Stadium.

Munich draw after two late goals

PARMA	2
1860 MUNICH	2

TSV 1860 Munich fought back with two goals in the final 11 minutes to earn a 2-2 draw with Parma in their UEFA Cup third round, first leg match last week.

The Italians were without all four of their recognised forwards but took the lead in thick fog in the second minute when Ghanaian Stephan Appiah fired home from the edge of the penalty area.

French midfielder Johan Micoud, playing as a stand-in striker, doubled Parma's lead nine minutes later when he robbed defender Ned Zelic inside the area and coolly finished.

TSV twice went close to scoring before the break when Thomas Haessler struck the post with a 25-metre free kick and then Australian Paul Agostino hit the woodwork with a well-struck shot.

It was not until the 79th minute that the impressive Munich side were able to gain some reward for their spirited play when Czech midifielder Roma Tyce picked up a loose ball, swerved past Fabio Cannavaro and slipped the ball past Gialuigi Buffon.

TSV grabbed an equaliser in the final minute when Markus Beierle drove home a right-wing cross from Daniel Borimirov.

Parma's Matias Almeyda (right) tussles for the ball with 1860 Munich forward Paul Agostino during their UEFA Cup match at a foggy Tardini Stadium.

Leverkusen salvage thrilling 4-4 daw with AEK

BAYER LEVERKUSEN	4
AEK ATHENS	4

Bayer Leverkusen midfielder Carsten Ramelow scored in injury time to salvage a 4-4 draw in the home leg of their UEFA Cup third round tie against AEK Athens last week.

Fernando Navas had given the Greek side the lead in the 79th minute.

Ramelow then scored from just outside the penalty area seconds from the final whistle to save the German first division leaders from an embarrassing defeat.

AEK went ahead after five minutes when Vassilis Laksis fastened on to a low cross from fellow midfielder Vassilis Tsartas to score from close range.

Veteran striker Ulf Kirsten equalised with a header from a Ze Roberto cross in the 25th minute and gave Leverkusen the lead with another headed goal in the 42nd minute.

Navas then exploited a blunder by Nigerian defender Pascal Ojigwe to put AEK back into the match from just outside the penalty area seconds into the second half.

Two minutes later midfielder Robert Kovac raced into the box unchallenged to put Leverkusen 3-2 up but in the 55th minute he brought down striker Demis Nikolaidis in the box, enabling Tsartas to make it 3-3 from the penalty spot.

AEK Athens' Vassilis Tsartas (right) challenges Bayer Leverkusen's Brazilian Ze Roberto during their third round match at the BayArena in Leverkusen.

Barce outclass Bruges

CLUB BRUGES	0
BARCELONA	2

First half goals from Rivaldo and Patrick Kluivert gave Barcelona a priceless 2-0 away win over Club Bruges in a UEFA Cup third round, first leg tie last week.

Barcelona, reluctant participants in the competition after being dumped out of the Champions league, had to defend for long spells against the Belgian league leaders but ran out comfortable winners.

The home side, who have won their first 13 domestic league games, made the brighter start but gifted Barcelona the lead on 24 minutes when defenders stood watching while Brazilian Rivaldo pounced to squeeze a low shot past Dejan Nemec.

Seven minutes later the visitors put the result beyond doubt when Dutchman Kluivert hung in the air to head home a Frank de Boer free kick.

Bruges, UEFA Cup semifinalists in 1988, pressed forward, Peruvian striker Andres Mendoza hitting the woodwork three times, but the packed Barcelona defence held out.

Barcelona's Marc Overmars (left) celebrates Patrick Kluivert's goal with teammate Philip Cocu as Club Bruge's goalkeeper Dejan Nemec looks on during their match at the Jan Breydel Stadium in Bruges.

WORLD

SERIE A MATCH ABANDONED

Reggina fans throw flares, fruit and water bottles onto field

An Italian first division match between Reggina and Brescia was suspended and then abandoned last Sunday after home fans through flares, staves, fruit and plastic water bottles on to the pitch.

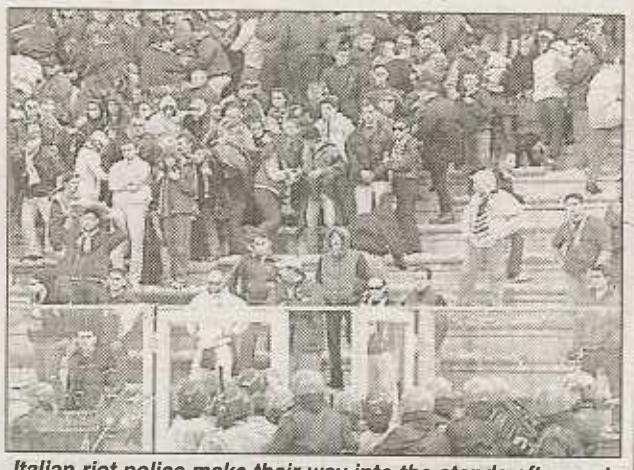
Pavel Srnicek: Struck by a firework

The match was halted briefly at the start of the second half when Brescia's Czech goalkeeper Pavel Srnicek was hit by a firework thrown from behind his goal. He was only slightly hurt and the match soon restarted.

But when Reggina went 2-0 down in the 70th minute fans again threw objects on to the pitch prompting Pierluigi Collina, Italy's most respected referee, to halt the game for four minutes.

Brescia scored a third goal in the 81st minute and again the Reggina fans hurled objects from the terraces.

Riot police intervened to restore order and Collina abandoned the match and led the teams to the dressing rooms. It was unclear if the 3-0 scoreline would stand but Brescia appeared certain to be awarded the victory.



Italian riot police make their way into the stands after seats were thrown on the field as Reggina hosted Brescia

IRAN SET NEW RECORD

Iran set a World Cup qualifying record score when they beat Guam 19-0 in Asia's first round of qualifying for the 2002 finals.

Charlton Athletic midfielder Karim Bagheri scored six times at the Takhti Stadium in Tabriz last Friday as Iran improved on their own record, set when they defeated the Maldives 17-0 in the qualifying tournament for the 1998 finals.

Bagheri scored seven in the win over the Indian Ocean island side in 1997, helping Iran qualify for the World Cup for the first time in 20 years.

Other scorers were Ali Daei, the current Asian player of the year, who claimed four, as did Pirouzi striker Ali Karimi.

Esteghlal's former Rapid Vienna forward Farhad Majidi hit a hat-trick.

The defeat was the second by the same scoreline this year for the American protectorate. They were beaten 19-0 by China in January in the Asian Cup qualifying tournament in Vietnam.

Karim Bagheri: Scorer of six in Iran's record win over Guam.

WORLD RESULTS...WORLD RESULTS...WORLD RESULTS...

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Newcastle United 2 Liverpool 1, Leeds United 1 Arsenal 0, Charlton Athletic 0 Sunderland 1, Coventry City 1 Aston Villa 1, Derby County 0 Manchester United 3, Everton 2 Chelsea 1, Manchester City 2 Ipswich Town 3, Middlesbrough 2 Bradford City 2, Southampton 2 West Ham United 3, Tottenham Hotspur 3 Leicester City 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Manchester United	**15**	**11**	**3**	**1**	**39**	**10**	**36**
2. Arsenal	15	8	4	3	23	13	28
3. Ipswich Town	15	8	3	4	23	16	27
4. Leicester City	15	7	5	3	14	11	26
5. Liverpool	15	7	3	5	29	23	24
6. Aston Villa	14	6	5	3	17	12	23
7. Newcastle United	15	7	2	6	17	15	23
8. Tottenham Hotspur	15	7	2	6	22	21	23
9. Sunderland	15	6	5	4	15	16	23
10. Leeds United	14	6	4	4	21	19	22
11. West Ham United	15	5	6	4	21	17	21
12. Charlton Athletic	15	6	3	6	21	21	21
13. Everton	15	6	3	6	19	21	21
14. Chelsea	15	4	5	6	26	22	17
15. Southampton	15	4	5	6	21	27	17
16. Manchester City	15	4	2	9	17	28	14
17. Coventry City	15	3	3	9	14	30	12
18. Middlesbrough	15	2	5	8	19	26	11
19. Derby County	15	1	7	7	18	31	10
20. Bradford City	15	1	5	9	7	24	8

LEADING SCORERS

10 - Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink (Chelsea), Mark Viduka (Leeds United), Teddy Sheringham (Manchester United)

9 - Thierry Henry (Arsenal), Marcus Stewart (Ipswich), Emile Heskey (Liverpool)

7 - Michael Owen (Liverpool), David Beckham (Manchester United)

ENGLISH FIRST DIVISION

Barnsley1 Portsmouth 0, Birmingham 2 Huddersfield 1, Blackburn 1 Gillingham 2, Crewe 1 Sheffield Wed 0, Crystal Palace 2 Stockport 2, Fulham 2 Grimsby 1, Norwich 1 Wimbledon 2,

Nottm Forest 3 Tranmere 1, QPR 2 Wolverhampton 2, Sheffield Utd 1 Bolton 0, Watford OFF Burnley, West Brom 3 Preston 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Fulham	**19**	**15**	**3**	**1**	**46**	**13**	**48**
2. Watford	18	12	3	3	37	19	39
3. Birmingham	19	11	4	4	30	17	37
4. West Brom	20	11	4	5	27	21	37
5. Bolton	20	10	6	4	31	20	36
6. Burnley	19	10	5	4	23	20	35
7. Blackburn	19	10	4	5	30	21	34
8. Preston	19	10	4	5	25	20	34
9. Nottm Forest	18	10	3	5	29	21	33
10. Sheff Utd	19	9	4	6	22	20	31
11. Wimbledon	18	7	6	5	26	19	27
12. Barnsley	20	7	4	9	26	30	25
13. Portsmouth	20	5	8	7	22	26	23
14. Gillingham	20	5	7	8	24	31	22
15. Crewe	20	6	3	11	15	24	21
16. Wolverhampton	20	4	8	8	20	23	20
17. Norwich	19	5	5	9	18	25	20
18. Crystal Palace	19	5	4	10	25	30	19
19. Tranmere	20	5	4	11	23	32	19
20. Sheff Wed	20	5	3	12	21	36	18
21. Grimsby	18	5	2	11	14	26	17
22. QPR	19	2	10	7	21	30	16
23. Stockport	20	3	7	10	24	37	16
24. Huddersfield	19	1	5	13	12	30	8

ENGLISH FIRST DIVISION

Bournemouth OFF Reading, Bristol City 1 Wigan 1, Bury OFF Brentford, Cambridge Utd 3 Swansea 3, Colchester 0 Wycombe 0, Oldham 0 Millwall 1, Oxford Utd 2 Notts County 3, Port Vale 3 Luton 0, Rotherham 3 Peterborough 0, Swindon 0 Stoke 3, Walsall 3 Northampton 0, Wrexham 1 Bristol Rovers 0,.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Millwall	**19**	**12**	**3**	**4**	**36**	**16**	**39**
2. Walsall	19	11	5	3	35	18	38
3. Wigan	19	10	8	1	25	14	38
4. Rotherham	19	11	4	4	33	22	37
5. Reading	18	10	2	6	37	22	32
6. Stoke	18	8	6	4	29	20	30
7. Wycombe	19	8	6	5	20	15	30
8. Bristol City	18	7	7	4	27	15	28
9. Northampton	18	8	4	6	21	20	28
10. Wrexham	19	7	5	7	30	32	26
11. Cambridge Utd	19	6	6	7	30	28	24
12. Peterborough	19	7	3	9	23	26	24
13. Bury	18	7	3	8	17	23	24
14. Notts County	18	7	3	8	21	29	24
15. Bristol Rovers	18	5	7	6	24	20	22
16. Brentford	16	5	7	4	17	25	22
17. Colchester	19	5	6	8	16	21	21
18. Port Vale	17	5	5	7	20	22	20
19. Bournemouth	18	4	7	7	26	24	19
20. Oldham	18	5	4	9	19	29	19
21. Swansea	18	4	6	8	19	25	18
22. Swindon	19	4	5	10	18	37	17
23. Luton	18	2	6	10	17	32	12
24. Oxford Utd	19	2	2	15	17	42	8

ENGLISH THIRD DIVISION

Blackpool 2 Darlington 1, Brighton 4 Shrewsbury 0, Cardiff 3 Hartlepool 2, Halifax 2 Chesterfield 2, Hull 2 Carlisle 1, Kidderminster 3 York 1, Leyton Orient 2 Macclesfield 1, Lincoln City 3 Exeter 1, Rochdale OFF Plymouth, Scunthorpe 6 Mansfield 0, Southend0 Cheltenham 1, Torquay 2 Barnet 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Chesterfield	**19**	**12**	**6**	**1**	**41**	**18**	**42**
2. Brighton	19	12	3	4	35	15	39
3. Leyton Orient	19	10	6	3	29	21	36
4. Rochdale	18	9	6	3	27	16	33
5. Cardiff	18	8	8	2	34	22	32
6. Scunthorpe	19	9	4	6	27	15	31
7. Cheltenham	19	9	4	6	23	17	31
8. Southend	19	7	8	4	23	21	29
9. Barnet	19	7	6	6	31	24	27
10. Hull	19	6	9	4	18	16	27
11. Kidderminster	18	6	7	5	20	21	25
12. Blackpool	19	7	4	8	26	33	25
13. Macclesfield	19	5	8	6	24	27	23
14. Hartlepool	19	6	5	8	26	30	23
15. Mansfield	19	5	7	7	28	36	22
16. Lincoln City	18	5	6	7	26	27	21
17. Shrewsbury	18	6	3	9	17	28	21
18. Darlington	19	5	5	9	16	20	20
19. Exeter	19	4	7	8	17	23	19
20. York	19	5	4	10	18	30	19
21. Torquay	19	4	5	10	24	37	17
22. Plymouth	16	4	4	8	18	24	16
23. Halifax	19	3	6	10	20	32	15
24. Carlisle	19	3	3	13	20	35	12

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Rangers 5 Celtic 1, Aberdeen 3 Motherwell 3, Dundee United 3 Dunfermline Athletic 2, Hearts 3 Dundee 1, Kilmarnock 0 St Johnstone 2, St Mirren 1 Hibernian 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Celtic	**17**	**14**	**2**	**1**	**43**	**19**	**44**
2. Hibernian	17	11	4	2	31	12	37
3. Rangers	16	10	2	4	36	21	32
4. Kilmarnock	17	9	3	5	22	17	30
5. Hearts	17	7	4	6	28	28	25
6. St Johnstone	17	6	5	6	18	24	23
7. Dundee	17	6	4	7	24	18	22
8. Motherwell	17	5	4	8	22	26	19
9. Dunfermline	17	4	5	8	14	22	17
10. Aberdeen	16	3	7	6	17	23	16
11. St Mirren	17	3	2	12	12	33	11
12. Dundee United	17	1	2	14	11	35	5

SCOTTISH FIRST DIVISION

Ayr 4 Raith 2, Clyde 0 Alloa 0, Falkirk 0 Airdrie 2, Morton 2 Inverness CT 0, Ross County 0 Livingston 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Livingston	**15**	**9**	**4**	**2**	**33**	**16**	**31**
2. Falkirk	16	10	1	5	33	25	31
3. Ayr	16	8	6	2	30	21	30
4. Raith	15	6	3	6	24	20	21
5. Inverness CT	16	6	3	7	29	26	21

SCOTTISH SECOND DIVISION

Arbroath 3 Stirling 2, Berwick 1 Forfar 1, Partick 2 Queen Of the South 1, Queens Park 1 Clydebank 1.

SCOTTISH THIRD DIVISION

Stranraer1 Stenhousemuir 4.

Albion 3 Montrose 2, Brechin 0 Hamilton 0, Cowdenbeath 2 Peterhead 0, East Fife 1 Dumbarton 0, Elgin 1 East Stirling 2.

SCOTTISH THIRD DIVISION

Roma 1 Fiorentina 0, Bari 2 Udinese 1, Juventus 2 Verona 1, Parma 2 Lazio 0, Perugia 1 Bologna 3, Vicenza 0 Inter Milan 0, Reggina v Brescia. Match abandoned due to crowd trouble with Brescia winning 3-0. Atalanta 1 Lecce 0, AC Milan 1 Napoli 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. AS Roma	**8**	**7**	**0**	**1**	**20**	**7**	**21**
2. Atalanta Bergamo	8	5	3	0	15	6	18
3. Udinese	8	5	1	2	16	8	16
4. Bologna	8	5	1	2	15	9	16
5. Juventus	8	4	3	1	12	7	15
6. Parma	8	4	2	2	11	7	14
7. AC Milan	8	3	3	2	13	11	12
8. Lazio	8	3	3	2	11	9	12
9. Inter Milan	8	3	2	3	10	10	11
10. Lecce	8	3	2	3	6	9	11
11. Fiorentina	7	2	4	1	14	13	10
12. Perugia	8	2	2	4	11	15	8
13. Vicenza	8	2	2	4	9	13	8
14. Verona	8	1	4	3	10	15	7
15. Brescia	7	0	3	4	6	13	3
16. Bari	8	1	2	5	6	14	5
17. Napoli	8	0	3	5	6	15	3
18. Reggina	7	1	0	6	4	13	3

NOTE - Table does not take in to account Reggina v Brescia match, abandoned after due to crowd trouble with Brescia winning 3-0. Result expected to stand.

SPANISH PRIMERA LIGA

Athletic Bilbao 4 Rayo Vallecano 2, Barcelona 2 Osasuna 0, Deportivo Coruna 1 Celta Vigo 0, Malaga 3 Alaves 1, Numancia 0 Las Palmas 1, Racing Santander 1 Espanyol 2, Real Valladolid 2 Real Sociedad 1, Valencia 2 Real Oviedo 0, Real Mallorca 2 Villarreal 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Valencia	**12**	**7**	**3**	**2**	**23**	**9**	**24**
2. Deportivo Coruna	12	7	3	2	21	10	24
3. Real Madrid	11	6	2	3	23	14	20
4. Real Mallorca	12	6	2	4	14	13	20
5. Rayo Vallecano	12	5	4	3	25	18	19
6. Barcelona	12	6	1	5	20	15	19
7. Alaves 12	5	3	4	17	11	18	
8. Espanyol 12	5	3	4	12	10	18	
9. Real Oviedo	12	5	2	5	16	16	17
10. Celta Vigo	12	5	2	5	14	14	17
11. Las Palmas	12	5	2	5	14	23	17
12. Malaga	12	4	3	5	18	19	15
13. Valladolid	12	3	6	3	13	14	15
14. Athletic Bilbao	12	4	3	5	15	19	15
15. Villarreal	12	4	3	5	12	17	15
16. Real Zaragoza	11	3	4	4	12	12	13
17. Numancia	12	3	2	7	13	21	11
18. Real Sociedad	12	3	2	7	14	27	11
19. Racing Santander	12	2	4	6	14	20	10
20. Osasuna	12	1	6	5	9	17	9

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

TSV 1860 Munich 0 SpVgg Unterhaching 2, Werder Bremen 1 VfB Stuttgart 0, Bayer Leverkusen 4 Kaiserslautern 2, SC Freiburg 1 Bayern Munich 1, Eintracht Frankfurt 0 Hertha Berlin 4, Borussia Dortmund 2 VfL Wolfsburg 1, Energie Cottbus 0 Cologne 2, Hansa Rostock 1 Hamburg SV 0, Schalke 04 2 VfL Bochum 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Bayer Leverkusen	**14**	**8**	**4**	**2**	**22**	**14**	**28**
2. Schalke 04	14	8	3	3	31	14	27
3. Hertha Berlin	14	9	0	5	32	21	27
4. Bayer Munich	14	7	2	5	30	18	23
5. Borussia Dortmund	14	7	2	5	22	24	23
6. Cologne	14	6	3	5	26	25	21
7. Kaiserslautern	14	6	2	6	19	20	20
8. Eintracht Frankfurt	14	6	2	6	19	21	20
9. VfL Wolfsburg	14	4	6	4	29	21	18
10. Hamburg SV	14	5	3	6	30	27	18
11. Hansa Rostock	14	5	3	6	12	22	18
12. Werder Bremen	14	4	5	5	18	20	17
13. SpVgg Unterhaching	14	4	5	5	17	22	17
14. SC Freiburg	14	4	4	6	16	18	16
15. TSV 1860 Munich	14	3	6	5	17	23	15
16. VfB Stuttgart	14	3	5	6	20	25	14
17. Energie Cottbus	14	4	2	8	15	26	14
18. VfL Bochum	14	3	3	8	11	25	12

FRENCH CHAMPIONNAT

St Etienne 0 Nantes 2, Sedan 0 Girondins Bordeaux 0, Bastia 3 Olympique Marseille 0, Lille 1 Paris St Germain 1 - match abandoned after 65 minutes. Waterlogged pitch. RC Lens 4 Monaco 3, Metz 1 Toulouse 1, Stade Rennes 0 AJ Auxerre 1, Troyes 0 En Avant Guingamp 1, Strasbourg 0 Olympique Lyon 3.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Girondins Bordeaux	**17**	**8**	**6**	**3**	**25**	**14**	**30**
2. Sedan	17	8	5	4	23	16	29
3. En Avant Guingamp	17	8	4	5	20	19	28
4. Nantes	16	8	3	5	27	19	27
5. Lille	16	7	5	4	17	11	26
6. Paris St Germain	16	7	4	5	28	22	25
7. RC Lens	17	6	6	5	21	18	24
8. Bastia	16	7	3	6	18	17	24
9. Olympique Lyon	16	5	8	3	20	14	23
10. Troyes	17	6	5	6	20	24	23
11. Monaco	17	6	4	7	24	23	22
12. AJ Auxerre	17	6	4	7	17	19	22
13. St Etienne	17	5	6	6	24	25	21
14. Metz	17	5	5	7	15	22	20
15. Stade Rennes	17	5	4	8	16	18	19
16. Olympique Marseille	17	5	3	9	17	23	18
17. Strasbourg	17	4	3	10	14	36	15
18. Toulouse	16	2	6	8	14	20	12

DUTCH FIRST DIVISION

Feyenoord 1 Willem II Tilburg 0, Twente Enschede 3 Groningen 0, PSV Eindhoven 2 NAC Breda 1, NEC Nijmegen 0 Heerenveen 0, Utrecht 2 Ajax Amsterdam 1, RBC Roosendaal 0 Roda JC Kerkrade 4, Graafschap Doetinchem 5 Fortuna Sittard 1, AZ Alkmaar 1 Sparta Rotterdam 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Feyenoord	**12**	**10**	**1**	**1**	**30**	**11**	**31**
2. PSV Eindhoven	13	9	3	1	23	9	30
3. Vitesse Arnhem	13	9	2	2	29	18	29
4. Roda JC Kerkrade	13	7	3	3	28	19	24
5. Ajax Amsterdam	14	7	3	4	30	17	24
6. NEC Nijmegen	14	5	8	1	23	15	23
7. RKC Waalwijk	13	6	4	3	15	10	22
8. AZ Alkmaar	13	6	2	5	24	22	20
9. Twente Enschede	14	5	5	4	25	23	20
10. NAC Breda	13	5	2	6	20	21	17
11. Utrecht	14	4	3	7	23	29	15
12. Heerenveen	12	3	5	4	13	18	14
13. Willem II Tilburg	13	3	5	5	19	20	14
14. Graafschap Doetinchem	15	4	1	10	23	29	13
15. Groningen	14	3	3	8	18	28	12
16. Sparta Rotterdam	13	2	3	8	18	28	10
17. RBC Roosendaal	14	3	0	11	25	35	9
18. Fortuna Sittard	13	0	4	9	7	32	4

BELGIAN FIRST DIVIION

Eendracht Aalst 1 Beveren 1, Club Bruges 2 Antwerp 0, Mechelen 4 Charleroi 3, Excelsior Mouscron 4 Harelbeke 3, Sint-Truiden 1 Westerlo 2, Lokeren 1 Ghent 1, La Louviere 0 Lierse 2, Germinal Beerschot 0 Anderlecht 1, Standard Liege 2 Genk 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Club Bruges	**14**	**14**	**0**	**0**	**53**	**8**	**42**
2. Anderlecht	14	11	3	0	43	13	36
3. Standard Liege	14	9	3	2	37	16	30
4. Excelsior Mouscron	14	8	1	5	32	17	25
5. Charleroi	14	8	0	6	25	29	24
6. Ghent	14	7	3	4	30	23	24
7. Westerlo	14	7	3	4	23	22	24
8. Lierse	14	7	2	5	25	21	23
9. Germinal Beerschot	14	6	0	8	21	23	18
10. Lokeren	14	4	6	4	15	21	18
11. Beveren	14	4	4	6	12	29	16
12. Genk	14	3	6	5	16	16	15
13. Antwerp	14	4	1	9	13	23	13
14. Sint-Truiden	14	3	3	8	16	26	12
15. Eendracht Aalst	14	3	3	8	17	34	12
16. Mechelen	14	2	3	9	19	32	9
17. Harelbeke	14	2	1	11	19	45	7
18. La Louviere	14	1	4	9	11	29	7

CROATIAN FIRST DIVISION

Hajduk 3 Rijeka 0, Zagreb 3 Cakovec 0, Marsonia 3 Cibalia 3, Slaven Belupo 3 Sibenik 1, Varteks 4 Hrv.Dragovoljac 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Osijek	**16**	**12**	**3**	**1**	**42**	**21**	**39**
2. Hajduk	17	10	3	4	28	11	33
3. Dinamo	16	9	5	2	35	15	32
4. Zagreb	17	9	3	5	37	31	30
5. Varteks	17	7	5	5	34	28	26
5. Slaven Belupo	17	7	4	6	25	21	25
7. Sibenik	17	6	3	8	18	24	21
8. Cakovec	17	5	5	7	15	22	20
9. Hrv.Dragovoljac	17	4	3	10	21	37	15
10. Rijeka	17	3	4	10	13	28	13
11. Cibalia	17	1	9	7	17	32	12
12. Marsonia	17	3	3	11	21	38	12

GREEK FIRST DIVISION

Paniliakos 1 Iraklis Salonika 2, Ionikos 2 Panionios 2, Ethnikos Asteras 1 Aris Salonika 0, OFI Crete 5 Athinaikos 3, Panachaiki 3 Kalamata 2, Panathinaikos 3 Xanthi 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Olympiakos	**7**	**5**	**2**	**0**	**22**	**5**	**17**
2. Iraklis Salonika	8	5	2	1	12	5	17
3. Panathinaikos	8	4	4	0	13	5	16
4. Xanthi	8	4	3	1	8	6	15
5. Ionikos	8	4	2	2	14	10	14
6. Ethnikos Asteras	8	4	2	2	14	16	14
7. Aris Salonika	8	4	1	3	12	8	13
8. AEK Athens	7	4	1	2	13	10	13
9. PAOK Salonika	7	2	4	1	11	10	10
10. Panionios	8	1	4	3	7	12	7
11. Panachaiki	8	2	1	5	11	17	7
12. Kalamata	8	1	3	4	11	15	6
13. Athinaikos	8	2	0	6	10	19	6
14. PAS Ioannina	7	1	2	4	9	12	5
15. OFI Crete	8	1	2	5	9	16	5
16. Paniliakos	8	0	3	5	3	13	3

ROMANIAN FIRST DIVISION

FCM Bacau 0 Rapid Bucharest 2, Arges Pitesti 1 Steaua Bucharest 1, Rocar Bucharest 2 Universitatea Craiova 0, Ceahlaul Piatra Neamt 3 Gloria Bistrita 2, Gaz Metan Medias 0 Otelul Galati 0, Brasov 3 Foresta Falticeni 1, Petrolul Ploiesti 2 National Bucharest 0, Dinamo Bucharest 3 Petrolul Ploiesti 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Steaua Bucharest	**15**	**9**	**4**	**2**	**28**	**17**	**31**
2. Petrolul Ploiesti	15	8	3	4	21	14	27
3. Arges Pitesti	15	7	4	4	20	18	25
4. Dinamo Bucharest	15	7	3	5	31	27	24
5. Brasov	15	7	3	5	12	9	24
6. Universitatea Craiova	15	7	3	5	16	16	24
7. Foresta Suceava	15	6	5	4	27	25	23

NATIONAL LEAGUE

SOCCER	TOTAL							HOME						AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A
SYDNEY OLYMPIC	7	5	2	0	13	3	17	4	4	0	0	9	0	3	1	2	0	4	3
WOLLONGONG WOLVES	7	4	2	1	12	8	14	4	2	1	1	6	5	3	2	1	0	6	3
SOUTH MELBOURNE	7	3	3	1	13	6	12	4	2	2	0	9	3	3	1	1	1	4	3
CARLTON SC	7	3	3	1	12	8	12	3	2	1	0	9	3	4	1	2	1	3	5
NORTHERN SPIRIT	7	3	2	2	11	7	11	4	2	2	0	6	2	3	1	0	2	5	5
PERTH GLORY	7	3	2	2	12	9	11	3	2	1	0	7	2	4	1	1	2	5	7
SYDNEY UNITED	7	3	2	2	9	13	11	4	2	2	0	7	5	3	1	0	2	2	8
CANBERRA COSMOS	7	3	1	3	13	11	10	2	1	0	1	4	2	5	2	1	2	9	9
ADELAIDE CITY FORCE	7	3	1	3	10	14	10	5	2	1	2	9	11	2	1	0	1	1	3
MARCONI STALLIONS	7	2	3	2	8	7	9	3	1	1	1	4	4	4	1	2	1	4	3
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	7	3	0	4	10	12	9	3	2	0	1	7	3	4	1	0	3	3	9
PARRAMATTA POWER	7	2	1	4	9	11	7	4	1	0	3	5	8	3	1	1	1	4	3
FOOTBALL KINGZ	7	2	1	4	10	14	7	4	2	1	1	7	3	3	0	0	3	3	11
NEWCASTLE UNITED	7	1	3	3	5	12	6	3	1	0	2	2	5	4	0	3	1	3	7
BRISBANE STRIKERS	7	1	2	4	8	13	5	2	0	1	1	3	4	5	1	1	3	5	9
EASTERN PRIDE	7	0	2	5	8	15	2	4	0	2	2	3	6	3	0	0	3	4	9

FOOTBALL KINGZ 0
CARLTON SC 0

Venue: Ericsson Stadium. **Crowd:** 6,605. **Referee:** B. Hugo.
Cautions: Bunce (FK) 40, Lines (FK) 42, Jackson (FK) 55, Urlovic (FK) 78, Markovski (CS) 40.
Teams: FOOTBALL KINGZ: Marsh, Bunce, Lines, Osman, Jackson, Rufer (Stevens 77), Urlovic, Ngata, Campbell (Cartwright 60), Vicelich, Burton (Ibrahim 44).
CARLTON SC: Anastasiadis, McPherson, Deans, Marth, Middleby, Thompson, Markovski (Motsiopoulos 70), Terminello, Horvat, Packer, De Jesus (Vasilevski 80).

NORTHERN SPIRIT 2
(Moriera 25, Burgess 58)
PERTH GLORY 0

Venue: North Sydney Oval. **Crowd:** 5,764. **Referee:** M. Shield.
Cautions: Foster (NS) 2, Naven (PG) 32, Enes (NS) 82.
Teams: NORTHERN SPIRIT: Henderson, Bingley, Cunico, Arnold, Foster (Bilokapic 84), Mendez (Langdon 45), Cranney, Thomas, Burgess, Moreira (Perenich 90), Enes.
PERTH GLORY: Petkovic, Trajkovski, Miller, Milicevic, Harnwell, Pryce, Naven (Buljan 55), Junior, Mori, Despotovski, Maloney (Faria 32).

LEADING GOALSCORERS
After Round Seven

THOMPSON Archie	(Carlton SC)	6
ANGELUCCI Jon	(Canberra)	5
BURGESS Ben	(Northern Spirit)	5
MORI Damian	(Perth Glory)	5
VLAHOS Andy	(South Melbourne)	5
STEVENS Tim	(Football Kingz)	4

EASTERN PRIDE 0
MARCONI STALLIONS 0

Venue: Mobil Park. **Crowd:** 1,441. **Referee:** J. Blaney.
Cautions: Dong Ki Kim (EP) 52, Fak (EP) 67.
Red Cards: Dong Ki Kim (EP) 79.
Teams: EASTERN PRIDE: Galekovic, Fak, Gotis, Kim,McNichol, Katz, Puca, Hutchinson, Wearne, Deak (Nilo 75), Watkins (Griffiths 85).
MARCONI STALLIONS: Aceski, C Gibson (J Gibson 79), Babic, Costanzo, Longo, Afkos, Care (Brownlie 75, Farah, Renaud (McDonald 63), Bell, Trajanovski.

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 2
(Huxley 16, Petrovski 86)
CANBERRA COSMOS 3
(Castro 46, Angelucci 64 & 66)

Venue: WIN Stadium. **Crowd:** 3,876. **Referee:** C. Diomis.
Cautions: Angelucci (CC) 35, Cervinski (WW) 44, Arranz (CC) 72, Souris (WW) 82, Milin (CC) 84, Rakic (CC) 86.
Red Cards: Petrovski (WW) 90.
Teams: WOLVES: Barlow, Souris (O'Grady 86), Stanton, Cervinski, Horsley, Reid, Petrovski, Young, Nohra (Bailla 63), Huxley, Blake.
COSMOS: Smith, Popovich, Purdue, Hagger (Imaya 79), Milin, Castro, Angelucci, Arranz (Ravanello 84), Lyons (Rakic 77), Hooker, Miyazawa.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Canberra Cosmos striker JON ANGELUCCI: Two goals in the space of just three minutes helping Canberra to a 3-2 win away at Wollongong.

ADELAIDE CITY 1
(Vidmar 62)
NEWCASTLE UNITED 1
(Buonavoglia 53 pen)

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium. **Crowd:** 3,904. **Referee:** C. Zetter.
Cautions: Roberts (NB) 11, Sabljak (AC) 37, Cagalj (AC) 52, Veart (AC) 58, Buonavoglia (NB) 65, Tsekenis (NB) 69, Vidmar (AC) 83.
Teams: ADELAIDE CITY: Cagalj, Lagati (Vidmar 58), Kovacevic, Buccharelli, (Rees 90), Brain (Pelosi 74), Veart, Sabljak, Hassell, Tunbridge, Pantelis, Karlovic.
NEWCASTLE UNITED: Catlin, Kemp, Roberts, McManus, Sprod, Dodd (Trpcevski 90), Wilson, Buonavoglia, Tsekenis, Wieczorek, (Surjan 81), McBreen (Juchniewicz 75).

SOUTH MELBOURNE 1
(Anastasiadis 95)
PARRAMATTA POWER 1
(Tobin 13)

Venue: Bob Jane Stadium. **Crowd:** 6,803. **Referee:** M. Breeze.
Cautions: Orlic (PP) 6.
Teams: SOUTH MELBOURNE: Petkovic, DeAmicis, Durakovic, Clarkson, Panopoulos (Iosifidis 74), Coveny (Anastasiadis 64), Trimboli, Boutsianis, Vlahos (Kalogeracos 78), Susa, Kisnorbo.
PARRAMATTA POWER: Crews, Elrich, Orlic, Tobin, Eagleton (Miller 68), Berry (Ardone 82), Blagojevic, B. Santalab (M. Santalab 68), Thorp, Vrkic, Bennett.

SYDNEY UNITED 1
(Deur 47)
BRISBANE STRIKERS 1
(Foster 69)

Venue: SUSC. **Crowd:** 3,875. **Referee:** N. Fox.
Cautions: Harris (BS) 2, Maric (SU) 46, Palapanis (SU) 63, Burt 74, Menapi 77, Dwyer (BS) 84, Arrarte 85.
Teams: SYDNEY UNITED: Hughes, Burt, Younis, Arrarte, Maric, Deur (Pondeljak 72), Rastall, Genc, Awaritefe (Menapi 50), Webb (Picken 55), Palapanis.
BRISBANE STRIKERS: Duke, Steffanutto, Bell, Grierson, Foster (Smeltz 81), Srhoj, McLaren, Davidson, Harris (Drake 65), Meredith (Dwyer 81), Rech.

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1
(Goutzioulis 94)
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 0

Venue: Belmore SG. **Crowd:** 6,182. **Referee:** S. Micallef.
Cautions: A. Vargas (MK) 39, Carle (SO) 65, Magdic (MK) 75, Sinozic (SO) 89.
Teams: SYDNEY OLYMPIC: Bolton, Sinozic, Wilson (Collina 71), Kohler, Juric, Moric (MacAllister79), Sarr (Goutzioulis 61), Halpin, Moore, Owens, Carle.
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: Acevski, Vargas, Ognenovski, Porter (Pelikan 80), Magdic, Banini (Kovacic 31), Kiratzoglou, Vargas, Zold, Da Costa (Sulemani 75), Cervinski.

ROUND EIGHT

FRIDAY DECEMBER 01

Parramatta Power	vs	Sydney United
Newcastle United	vs	Wollongong Wolves

SATURDAY DECEMBER 02

Canberra Cosmos	vs	South Melbourne
Brisbane Strikers	vs	Sydney Olympic
Marconi Stallions	vs	Football Kingz
Perth Glory	vs	Adelaide City

SUNDAY DECEMBER 03

Melbourne Knights	vs	Eastern Pride
Carlton SC	vs	Northern Spirit